

FOREWORD

Forum Secretary-General, Greg Urwin

I am pleased to provide the foreword to this report on media and communications capacity in the 14 Forum Island countries.

Informing Citizens: Opportunities for Media and Communications in the Pacific is an extensive study of the development needs in this important sector. The material within should prove to be a valuable resource for all stakeholders including the public, the media, regional entities, our Pacific governments, and development partners.

Informed citizens are central to sustained development and good governance in our region. They need to know not only what is happening, but why and how and when. They need to be able to comment and contribute to the development of their communities, nations and the region. The media is often the most effective way of doing this - and must itself be confident, well informed and professional.

Media practitioners, whether from government, civil society or the media industry need access to quality training and professional development. Industry organisations need also to promote high professional standards.

The information in this report was collected by 18 Pacific Island country researchers. They were coordinated by the AusAID-funded Pacific Media and Communications Facility. The recommendations for capacity building were guided by a Reference Group of Pacific Islanders.

Informing Citizens is a handbook for all those interested in an effective and vibrant media in the region, and adds to our understanding of this important sector in the Pacific.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In this short acknowledgement, we would like to pay tribute to the dedication of all those people who have worked for decades towards quality and independent media in the Pacific.

We hope that their substantial achievements in all areas of media and communications are reflected in this study.

Informing Citizens is the result of the input of hundreds of people throughout the 14 Forum Island countries.

Each of the 325 people interviewed by the 18 Pacific Island researchers gave of their time and experience generously. We thank them, and hope that the information they can now access through the study adequately meets their needs.

The researchers in each of the countries not only collected the data, but also provided their observations of their own country's aspirations. These ideas were crucial to the Reference Group in their deliberations on the strategies to strengthen media and communications in the Pacific.

The 25 members of the Reference Group attended three meetings over the nine-month period of the study. Most of the Reference Group members were senior representatives of regional organisations from the media industry, government and civil society with a direct interest in strengthening the capacity of media and communications in the region. We deeply appreciate the time and serious consideration they gave to the large amount of information collected by the researchers and their development of the recommended strategies.

We would also like to thank the five members PMCF Program Advisory Committee, Ms. Afu Billy, Mr. Johnson Honimae, Mr. Josua Mataika (acting for Mr. Perive Lene), Mr. Ieremia Tabai, and in the last meeting in June 2005, Mr. Russell Hunter for their oversight of the study and useful thoughts and contributions.

Thank you also to Dr. Helen Molnar for her research leadership, and her insistence that barriers to collecting accurate and useful information should be overcome. She brought her extensive knowledge of Pacific media and her commitment to media and communications in the region to this project. She supported the researchers and drew together all their findings into what we hope you agree is a useful and cogent handbook of information.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the Government of Australia's foresight in supporting the first study of its kind on the media and communications sector in the region. We hope that *Informing Citizens* will make a significant contribution to the thinking of all those interested in the development of media and communications in the Forum Island countries.

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GLOSSARY

Country is listed in brackets after the full title, where not implicit in its name.

Where organisations are regional or global, the place of its headquarters or secretariat is listed in brackets. UN organisations and conventions are similarly identified.

AADES	Australian Association of Distance Education Schools	
AAP	Australian Associated Press	
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation	
ADB	Asian Development Bank	
AFAP	Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific	
AFP	Agence France-Presse	
AGE	Accelerated Girls' Education	(PNG)
AIT	Auckland Institute of Technology (now Auckland University of Technology)	(New Zealand)
AMAK	Aia Maea Ainen Kiribati, or the National Council of Women	
AP	Associated Press	
APC	Australian Press Council	
APTN	Associated Press Television News	
ATF	Appropriate Technology Foundation	(PNG)
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development	
AYA	Australian Youth Ambassador	
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	
BCA	Breast Cancer Association	(Cook Islands)
BCN	Broadcasting Corporation of Niue	
BDA	Bureau of Domestic Affairs	(Palau)
BFTW	Bread for the World	(global, US)
BPA	Broadcasting and Publications Authority	(Kiribati)
CBC PNG and SI	Catholic Bishops' Conference of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands	
CBO	community-based organisation	
CCF	Citizens Constitutional Forum	(Fiji)
CCFD	Catholic Committee Against Hunger and for Development	(global, France)
CDI	Centre for Democratic Institutions	(Canberra, Aust)
CDI	Community Development Initiative	(PNG)
CDS	Community Development Scheme	(PNG)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	(UN)
CEO	chief executive officer	
CERD	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	(UN)
CFL	Communications Fiji Limited	
CHRI	Commonwealth Human Right Initiative	(India)
CIANGO	Cook Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	
CIBC	Cook Islands Broadcasting Corporation	
CIMA	Cook Islands Media Association	
CIN	Cook Islands News	

CINBC	Cook Islands National Broadcasting Corporation	
CIS	Community Initiative Scheme	(PNG)
CITC	Cook Islands Trading Corporation	
CITV	Cook Islands Television	
CJA	Commonwealth Journalism Association	(Fiji)
CMCL	Centre for Media and Communications Law	(Melbourne, Aust)
CMI	College of the Marshall Islands	
CNMI	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	
COM	College of Micronesia	(FSM)
CP	Coconut Production	(Tonga)
CPR	Commissioner for Public Relations	(Tonga)
CPRF	Community Peace and Restorative Fund	(Solomon Islands)
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission	(PNG)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child	(UN)
CRN PNG	Catholic Radio Network of Papua New Guinea	
CSO	civil society organisation	
CSP	Conservation Society of Pohnpei	
CTV	Community Television Nadi	(Fiji)
CUSO	Canadian University Services Overseas	
CWL	Catholic Women's League	(Tonga)
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	(Niue)
DFID	Department for International Development	(UK)
DIB	Development Investment Board	(Cook Islands)
DSE	Development Services Exchange	(Solomon Islands)
DSEI	Department of State Enterprises and Information	(PNG)
DWU	Divine Word University	(PNG)
ECPAT	Elimination of Child Prostitution and Trafficking	(Samoa)
ECREA	Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy	(Fiji)
ECSIEP	European Centre for Study, Information and Education on Pacific Issues	(The Netherlands)
EDF	European Development Fund	
EKT	Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu	
ELC	Environment Law Centre	(PNG)
EMW	Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland	(Germany)
EPA	Environment Protection Authority	(RMI)
EU	European Union	
FAO	Foreign Affairs Officer	(Tuvalu)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	(UN)
FATF	Financial Action Task Force	(Cook Islands)
FBCL	Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited	
FCOSS	Fiji Council of Social Services	
FES	Friedrich Ebert Foundation	(Germany)
FIMA	Fiji Islands Media Association	
FIT	Fiji Institute of Technology	
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit	(Cook Islands)

FJI	Fiji Journalism Institute	
FLO	Fa'ataua le Ola	(Samoa)
FMW	Fiji Media Watch Group	
FNA	Fiji Nursing Association	
FOI	freedom of information	
FORD	Foundation for Rural Development	(PNG)
FPSA	Fiji Public Service Association	
FSC	Family Support Centre	(Solomon Islands)
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia	
FSP	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific	(Vanuatu)
FSP/FSPK	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific, Kiribati	
FSPI	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International	(regional, Fiji)
FTP	file transfer protocol	
FTU	Film and Television Unit	(Fiji)
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre	
FWRM	Fiji Women's Rights Movement	
GBN	Graceland Broadcasting Network	(Samoa)
GCU	Government Communications Unit	(Solomon Islands)
GKP	Global Knowledge Partnerships	(PNG)
GPC	Group for Political Change	(Cook Islands)
GPS	Government Press Secretariat	(Samoa)
HELP	Health-Education-Livelihood-Participation Resources	(PNG)
HF	high frequency	
HIC-Net	Healthy Islands Communication Network	(Fiji)
HOMs	Heads of Ministry	(Cook Islands)
IANSA	International Action Network on Small Arms	(global, London)
IBI	Islands Business International	(Fiji)
ICCC	Independent Consumer and Competition Commission	(PNG)
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	(UN)
ICESCPR	International Covenant on Economic, Social, Civil and Political Rights	(UN)
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	(UN)
ICRAF	Individual and Community Rights Advocacy Forum	(PNG)
ICRAN	International Coral Reef Action Network	(RMI)
ICT	information and communications technology	
ICTV	Island Cable Television	(FSM)
ICTV	Island Cable Television	(Palau)
IEC	information, education and communication	
IFM	Isatabu Freedom Movement	(Solomon Islands)
ILO	International Labour Organization	(UN)
IMSC	Independent Media Standards Committee	(PNG)
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation	(global, London)
IRETA	Institute for Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture, USP	
ISP	Institutional Strengthening Project	(Samoa)

ISP	internet service provider	
IT	information technology	
IWGIA	International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs	(global, Denmark)
IWP	International Waters Project	(Cook Islands)
JAWS	Journalism Association of Western Samoa	
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	
KANGO	Kiribati Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	
KBB	Krai Bilong Baibel	(PNG)
KIMA	Kiribati Islands Media Association	
LDC	Least Developed Country	
LJSP	Law and Justice Sector Project	(PNG)
LTS	Loto Taumafai Society of the Disabled	(Samoa)
MAFFM	Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, Fisheries and Meteorology	(Samoa)
MASI	Media Association of the Solomon Islands	
MBC	Marshalls Broadcasting Company	
MCIC	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives	(Kiribati)
MCIT	Ministry of Communication and Information Technology	(Samoa)
MCTTD	Ministry of Communication, Transport and Tourism Development	(Kiribati)
MDG	Millennium Development Goals	(UN)
MDI	Media for Development Initiative	(PNG)
MEF	Malaita Eagle Force	(Solomon Islands)
MELAD	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development	(Kiribati)
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	(Samoa)
MEYSD	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport Development	(Kiribati)
MFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management	(Cook Islands)
MFMRD	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development	(Kiribati)
MHMS	Ministry of Health and Medical Services	(Kiribati)
MICMR	Ministry of Information, Communications and Media Relations	(Fiji)
MICNGO	Marshall Islands Council of Non-Governmental Organisations	
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa	
MISA	Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs	(Kiribati)
MISEREOR	German Catholic Bishops' Organisation for Development Cooperation	
MLO	media liaison officer	(Fiji)
MNRD	Ministry of Natural Resources Development	(Kiribati)
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	(Samoa)
MoH	Ministry of Health	(Samoa)
MOW	Ministry of Works	(Cook Islands)
MP	Member of Parliament	
MPA	marine protected area	(FSM)
MPWU	Ministry of Public Works and Utilities	(Kiribati)
MW	medium wave	
NARI	National Agriculture Research Institute	(PNG)

NBC	National Broadcasting Service	(PNG)
NCD	National Capital District	(PNG)
NCDC	National Capital District Commission	(PNG)
NCHP	National Centre for Health Promotion	(Fiji)
NCW	National Council of Women	(Cook Islands)
NCW	Niue Council of Women	
NCWFiji	National Council of Women Fiji	
NEC	National Executive Council	(PNG)
NFA	National Fisheries Authority	(PNG)
NGO	non-government organisation	
NIOFA	Niue Island Organic Farmer's Association	
NISANOC	Niue Island's Sports Association and National Olympic Committee	
NIUANGO	Niue Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	
NLTB	Native Land Trust Board	(Fiji)
NLU	National Liaison Unit	(PIANGO, Fiji)
NNCC	Niue National Council of Churches	
NPIC	National Policy on Information and Communication	(PNG)
NRI	National Research Institute	(PNG)
NTA	National Telecommunications Authority	(RMI)
NTN	Niugini Television Network	(PNG)
NTNK	Nei Tabera Ni Kai	(Kiribati)
NTV	Nauru Television	
NUANGO	Nauru Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	
NVS	National Volunteer Service	(PNG)
NYC	Niue Youth Council	
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development	
NZODA	New Zealand's Official Development Assistance	
OBN	Oceania Broadcasting Network	(Tonga)
OEK	Olbiil Era Kelula	(Palau)
OLSSI	O le Si'osi'omaga Society Incorporated	(Samoa)
PANG	Pacific Network on Globalisation	(Fiji)
PANGTEL	Papua New Guinea Radiocommunication and Telecommunication Technical Authority	
PASA	Pesticide Awareness and Sustainable Agriculture	(Tonga)
PCC	Pacific Council of Churches	(Fiji)
PCPI	Pacific Centre for Public Integrity	(Fiji)
PCRC	Pacific Concerns Resource Centre	(Fiji)
PCS	Palau Conservation Society	
Pfnet	People First Network	(Solomon Islands)
PIAF	Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation	(Cook Islands)
PIANGO	Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	(regional, Fiji)
PIBA	Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association	(regional, Fiji)
PIC	Pacific Island country	
PICCAP	Pacific Islands Climate Change Program	(Tuvalu)

PICRC	Palau International Coral Reef Centre	
PINA	Pacific Islands News Association	(regional, Fiji)
PIO	Public Information Officer	(FSM)
PMCF	Pacific Media and Communications Facility (AusAID)	(Melbourne, Aust)
PMG	Pitt Media Group	(Cook Islands)
PMI	Pacific Media Initiative	(AusAID)
PNCC	Palau National Communications Corporation	
PNG	Papua New Guinea	
PNGFA	PNG Forest Authority	
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants	(UN)
PPSIA	Pacific Partners Solomon Islands Association	
PR	public relations	
PREL	Pacific Resources for Education and Learning	(regional, Hawaii)
PRO	Public Relations Officer	
PRU	Public Relations Unit	
PS	Permanent Secretary	
PSB	public service broadcasting	
PSSC	Pacific Secondary School Certificate	
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands	
RDVA	Rural Development Volunteers Association	(Solomon Islands)
RFMF	Republic of Fiji Military Forces	
RFO	Radio France Outré-Mer	
RMAT	Rongorongo Man Ami Tautaeaka	(Kiribati)
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands	
RNZI	Radio New Zealand International	
RONTel	Republic of Nauru Telecommunications Corporation	
RRRT	Regional Rights Resource Team	(UNDP, Fiji)
RSIP	Royal Solomon Islands Police	
RSS	Real Simple Syndication	
RTA	Religious Television Association	(PNG)
RTC	Rural Training Centre	(Solomon Islands, Vanuatu)
SANA	situation analysis and needs assessment	
SBC	Samoa Broadcasting Corporation	
SDA	Seventh Day Adventists	(PNG)
SDS	Strategy for the Development of Samoa	
SIARTC	Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres	
SIBC	Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation	
SICHE	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education	
SIDT	Solomon Islands Development Trust	
SIGNIS	World Association of Catholic Communication	(global, London)
SIPPA	Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association	
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community	(regional, New Caledonia)
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme	(regional, Samoa)

STI	Sexually transmitted infection	
SUNGO	Samoa Umbrella of Non-Governmental Organisations	
SW	shortwave	
TAESP	Tuvalu Australian Associated School Project	
TANGO	Tonga Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	
TANGO	Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	
TBC	Tongan Broadcasting Commission	
TBN	Trinity Broadcasting Network	(Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu)
TBV	Television Blong Vanuatu	
TCC	Tonga Communications Corporation	
TCC	Tuvalu Christian Church	
TI	Transparency International	(global, Berlin)
TIV	Transparency International Vanuatu	
TKL	Telecom Services Kiribati Limited	
TMC	Tuvalu Media Corporation	
TNCC	Tonga National Council of Churches	
TNCW	Tuvalu National Council of Women	
TNYC	Tuvalu National Youth Council	
TOSU	Tuvalu Overseas Seamen's Union	
TPA	Tourism Promotion Authority	(PNG)
TTC	Tuvalu Telecommunications Corporation	
TTPI	Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands	(FSM)
TuFHA	Tuvalu Family Health Association	
TVNZ	Television New Zealand	
TVSI	TeleVision SI Co Ltd Incorporated	(Solomon Islands)
UCB	United Christian Broadcasters	(Auckland, NZ)
UK	United Kingdom	
UMDA	United Micronesia Development Association	(RMI)
UN	United Nations	
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund	
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund	
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women	
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea	
US	United States	
USP	University of the South Pacific	(Fiji)
VAGST	Value Added Goods and Services Tax	(Samoa)
VANGO	Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations	
VBMS	Vois Blong Mere Solomons	
VBTC	Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation	
VDW	Village Demonstration Worker	(Solomon Islands)
VFHA	Vanuatu Family Health Association	

VIP	VAT-inclusive price	(Fiji)
VNCW	Vanuatu National Council of Women	
VNWU	Vanuatu National Workers Union	
VOA	Voice of America	
VRDTCA	Vanuatu Rural Development and Training Centre Association	
VSA	Volunteer Service Abroad	(New Zealand)
VWC	Vanuatu Women's Centre	
WACC	World Association for Christian Communication	(global, London)
WHO	World Health Organization	(UN)
WIA	Workforce Investment Act	(RMI)
WMO	World Meteorological Organization	(UN)
WUTMI	Women United Together, Marshall Islands	
WWF	World Wildlife Fund, or World Wide Fund for Nature	(global, London)
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association	(PNG)

READING *INFORMING CITIZENS*

Informing Citizens: opportunities for media and communications in the Pacific reports on the findings of a situation analysis and needs assessment (SANA) of the capacity of the media, government and civil society to produce information on good governance in 14 Pacific Island Forum countries. The report consists of 17 chapters in the following order: a regional overview chapter, a legislative overview chapter, a chapter on the findings of a news content analysis in the 14 countries, and 14 country chapters organised in alphabetical order, commencing with the Cook Islands.

Chapter One, the Regional Overview, details the methodology for SANA, the principles which informed the research, and how the data was compiled. The chapter contains an analysis of the major themes and issues that emerged in the 14 country chapters, divided into four sections: Legislative Environment, Media Sector, Government Sector, and Civil Society Sector. It concludes with a list of regional strategies based on the research findings recommended by a SANA Reference Group of key stakeholders.

Chapter Two, Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media, analyses the constitutional guarantees for freedom of expression, freedom of the media and the right to information in the Pacific Island countries surveyed. It also analyses the degree to which public service broadcasting and media legislation guarantees separation from government in some of the countries surveyed. Section 1, Legislative Environment, in the country chapters provides further detail on the media regulatory environment in each country and complements Chapter Two.

Chapter Three, Pacific News Content Analysis, summarises the findings of the news content analysis conducted in the countries surveyed. Its focus is the coverage of news on governance issues. Appendix F contains the breakdown of the regional findings and the findings for each country in alphabetical order.

Chapters Four to Seventeen consist of country chapters. Each country chapter summarises the research findings for that country under the four main headings, Legislative Environment, Media Sector, Government Sector, and Civil Society Sector. There are a number of subsections under each of the four headings. Readers interested in specific areas, for example, the number of media outlets could find this information at subsection 2.1 *Media outlets* in each country chapter. Similarly, readers interested in the media produced by individual government departments, can find this information in subsection 3.3 *Government department media content*. Each country chapter also includes the in-country researcher's observations on the capacity of the media, government and civil society to produce information on good governance using the media.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

The AusAID-funded Pacific Media and Communications Facility (PMCF) commenced in May 2004. The PMCF is a three-year regional media governance project involving the 14 Forum Island countries. *Informing Citizens: opportunities for media and communications in the Pacific* is the major output for year one. The report contains a situation analysis and needs assessment (SANA) which assesses *the capacity* of the media, government and civil society sectors to promote good governance through the media.

The Pacific Island countries included in the survey are: the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The following areas are examined on a country-by-country basis:

- Legal and regulatory frameworks — media law, freedom of speech and expression, and laws governing information
- Cultural context
- Training institutions and infrastructure for media and communications
- Linkages and relationships between the three sectors below

Media sector

- In-country organisations producing print, radio, television and/or online media material for the public
- Ownership, financing, coverage, audience, technology and technical support
- Public service roles and responsibilities
- Local content, particularly on issues relating to governance
- Human resources — numbers, roles, qualifications and experience, pay levels and turnover
- Internal training programs and training experience
- National media organisations such as media watch organisations, media councils and professional associations (funding and human resources)
- Existence of professional codes of ethics and mechanisms for their enforcement

Government sector

- Structures, mechanisms and protocols for government communication and information on governance issues
- Skill and experience levels in relation to communications
- Internal training programs and training experience
- Technology

For government, the study considers capacity at political and senior official level, as well as at operational and technical levels in relevant agencies.

Civil society sector

- Main organisations concerned with governance issues
- Communications activities and media
- Funding, technology, constituents and human resources (positions, skills and experience)
- Access to training and training experience

1. METHODOLOGY**1.1 Terms and definitions**

Governance, in this analysis, is defined as *transparency and accountability* across the three sectors, and the existence of the *necessary consultative and participatory processes* to encourage this. The media are vital for attaining governance objectives as they have the ability to inform government, civil society and the public about issues of importance to each sector and to generate informed public debate. While the 'watchdog' role of the media is often emphasised in relation to governance, it should also be stressed that the media, if effective, are uniquely placed to facilitate inter-sectoral information flows, which are essential for the development of society.

The study defines *media governance content* broadly. This includes all public policy areas, such as economic and political reform, national security, health, education, agriculture, the environment, women's and children's issues, and human rights and national development issues.

The major media governance formats are:

- Press releases
- Radio and television programs, in particular, news, current affairs, magazine and development information programs, and radio talkback programs
- Community video programs
- Newspaper articles
- Newsletters (government and non-government)
- Online news

This media content is produced by the media and/or government or non-government organisation (NGO) officers.

The media surveyed are:

- National public service radio and television (government radio¹ and/or government-owned statutory corporations)
- Commercial radio and television
- Community radio and television
- Newspapers (private and government funded)
- Major online news services

The survey focussed on media organisations that *were based in-country*. Media organisations located outside the country that distribute media content in-country are listed but not analysed, as the focus is on local media capacity. For similar reasons, online news services operated from overseas sites are not included in the analysis.

The online news category in the survey refers to a news service that is produced *only online*. Media organisations that provide online news in addition to their main media output (such as newspapers and radio) are listed according to their major media category and details of their online service are included in this entry.

The newspapers included are mainly daily and weekly publications. The exception to this is FSM, where the newspapers are fortnightly, and Tuvalu, which has only one monthly newspaper. Significant regional news outlets such as *Islands Business* and PACNEWS are also included.

Media that do not employ journalists to produce local news, current affairs and/or information programs are listed, but are not included in the survey. Examples of these media are music-only FM

stations and cable or satellite television stations that produce no local news, current affairs or local information programs.

The government sector includes:

- National government, and in the case of FSM the survey includes two state governments also.
- The national department of communications, media or information, or an equivalent department that covers media legislation and regulation.
- The national government media or information unit or an equivalent unit that manages government public relations and dealings with the media.
- Media and/or press officers who work in government departments with the prime minister or president and senior ministers.
- Government departments and agencies that have officers who produce media content on a regular basis (at least every two to three months).

Civil society is defined as:

- Registered NGOs that work with the media to promote governance issues (health, women, youth and children's welfare, human rights, microeconomic reform, environmental protection, capacity building and so on).
- The survey includes NGOs that work with the media on a regular basis (at least every two to three months). These NGOs either produce their own media (print, radio, video, or online news), or liaise with the media to ensure that issues of importance to them are covered. The NGOs may or may not have a full-time media or information officer. They are more likely to have an officer who combines media duties with their other NGO work.

A key focus of the PMCF is capacity building. For the purposes of the survey, capacity is defined as:

- Social and legal factors such as legislation and cultural protocols that shape how institutions and organisations operate.
- Individual organisational and institutional processes, mandates, charters and organisational working culture.
- Organisational resources such as number of staff, training, qualifications, pay scale, length of tenure, technical resources (equipment required to perform work effectively) and financial resources (funding to hire staff and for research materials, equipment, travel, communications, staff development and so on).
- The effectiveness or otherwise of inter-sectoral networks or working partnerships between the three sectors.

The survey methodology and analysis also takes into account the fact that the economies and population bases of small, medium and larger Pacific Island countries differ markedly and that these differences impact on media governance capacity across the three sectors²

1.2 Research team

Fourteen in-country researchers and six assistant in-country researchers were engaged to conduct the research. The researchers were chosen on the basis of their experience in their respective fields, their knowledge of the three sectors, and their capacity to undertake the research and analyse national issues. The SANA Coordinator worked closely with the research team on the implementation of the survey and the collection of the data.

The Journalism Programme, University of the South Pacific (USP), conducted the regional news content analysis, with assistance from the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) Secretariat, Fiji, and the Media Council of Papua New Guinea.

The Centre for Media and Communications Law (CMCL) at Melbourne University was engaged to undertake a regional review of the freedom of expression, freedom of the media and the right to information guarantees in Pacific Island constitutions. The CMCL also analysed whether major broadcast legislation was encouraging an independent media environment, in particular independent public broadcasting services.

The Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI), Canberra, provided input on governance issues raised in the research, and strategies to address these.

Full details on the research team are in Appendix A.

1.3

Reference group

A SANA Reference Group of key stakeholders (Appendix B) was appointed to advise on the research methodology, provide feedback on the in-country research data and the news content analysis, and to assist with identifying the major issues in the research and develop strategies to address these. The Reference Group met three times during the research project.

1.4

Survey

The research tool was a survey (Appendix C). The survey was developed by the SANA Coordinator in consultation with the SANA Reference Group and the in-country researchers. The majority of interviews were conducted face-to-face, with a few conducted by telephone and online. The interviews were then transcribed and submitted to the SANA Coordinator, who wrote the report. A total of 325 interviews were completed (Appendix D). The survey period commenced in August 2004 and over half the research was completed by November 2004; the rest was completed early in 2005.

1.5

News content analysis

The research includes a news content analysis (radio, television, print and online news) from major media across the 14 Pacific Island countries and the regional online news service, PACNEWS for a three-week period, 2–21 August 2004. The aim of the analysis was to examine the governance news priorities of the different media and journalism practices that impact on the quality of governance coverage.

2.**MEDIA GOVERNANCE**

2.1

Principles

The following principles informed the survey questions and the analysis of the data.

- Effective media governance content requires a supportive legislative environment, which has legal protections for free speech and the media, and disclosure policies and/or legislation to enable freedom of information.
- Defamation is a civil law issue.
- Independent regulatory bodies with responsibility for media licensing and monitoring of local content and community service requirements are important for fair and apolitical licensing.
- Local content and community service requirements are necessary to encourage a range of local content, including governance content, and to ensure that government, NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) have the opportunity to access the airwaves in a cost-effective manner.
- Effective national public service broadcasting (PSB) requires legislation that clearly articulates its role and mandate and separates public service media from government.
- Public service media should produce programs for a diversity of audiences and language groups (urban, rural and outer island) and a range of political interests, not just the government.
- A diversity of media voices, including community radio and television, is essential to encourage a broad spectrum of public debate and genuine community participation.
- Public information, such as government speeches, policies, legislation, and Hansard, should be freely and easily available to journalists and the community.
- The government should provide information to all media, and not discriminate between media.
- Journalists need to be well trained and proactive, and have the skills to undertake analytical, objective and multiple-sourced reporting.
- Journalists trained in specialist areas, such as economics, business, health, education and investigative journalism, are necessary for comprehensive, high-quality coverage of governance issues.
- Tertiary level journalism training at universities and institutes of technology is necessary to increase the number of professionally trained journalists. This training needs to be flexibly delivered to ensure that it is accessible to both school leavers and working journalists who cannot study on campus full time.

- Journalists need access to reliable, good-quality technical facilities and equipment to produce news in an effective and timely manner.
- Strong, well-functioning national and regional professional media bodies are essential to develop journalism standards, codes of ethics, and complaints processes, and to ensure that the media sector is accountable to the public.
- NGOs need to understand that they have a responsibility to contribute to public debate via the media on governance issues, and that this sector is accountable to the public.
- Government departments and NGOs must have a good appreciation of media awareness and media advocacy to equip them to meet their media governance responsibilities.
- Members of Parliament and senior officers in government departments and NGOs need to have acquired media and communications skills, so that they can communicate authoritatively with the media and the public on behalf of their departments or organisations. It is vital that the media have access to high level officials.
- The media, government and NGO sectors should seek to maximise their opportunities for interaction through training workshops, forums and work attachments, so that each sector has a better understanding of the requirements of the other sector.
- A public that exercises its right to timely, relevant, quality information on governance issues is critical to raising the standards of the media. Public media literacy is fundamental to the principles of good governance in a democracy.

3. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Freedom of information and the media

Chapter Two, Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media, examines the constitutional guarantees relating to freedom of expression, freedom of the media and the right to freedom of information.

With the exception of the Constitution of Niue, which does not include any of these guarantees, all the other Pacific Island countries surveyed guarantee freedom of speech and expression. Six countries — FSM, Fiji, Palau, PNG, RMI and Tonga — specifically guarantee freedom of the press, while the Constitutions of Kiribati, the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu contain the less explicit guarantee of the freedom to communicate ideas and information. The Constitutions of four countries — the Cook Islands, Nauru, Samoa and Vanuatu — do not guarantee either freedom of the media or the freedom to communicate ideas and information.

Only two countries — Fiji and PNG — have Constitutions that include specific guarantees to the right to seek and receive information and ideas, and the right to freedom of information. The draft Solomon Islands Constitution 2004 also includes this. The current Solomon Islands Constitution and the Constitutions of Tuvalu, Kiribati and FSM guarantee freedom to receive ideas and information, but do not include a specific guarantee covering the right to freedom of information.

Until early 2005 Fiji was the only country with draft freedom of information (FOI) legislation. However, progress has been slow, as the draft legislation was developed in 2000. The Cook Islands has now also developed draft FOI legislation.

The fundamental aim of FOI legislation is to promote and enhance the processes of democracy and representative government by increasing access to information held by the government:

FOI legislation aims to: provide open and accountable government; increase public participation in government decision-making; ... and enable individuals to be kept informed of government decision-making processes that affect them. It has also been recognised that government information is a valuable public resource that is collected and created with public money for public purposes. In this sense, government information belongs to the public, and governments are "trustees" of that information on behalf of the public ... Further, it has been recognised that inappropriate government secrecy can allow corrupt practices to flourish, and that FOI and other accountability mechanisms help to protect against corruption.³

The right to government information is critical for media governance, as journalists require timely access to this information. Parliament is broadcast live in most of the countries, and Hansard is also available in the majority of countries. However, in some countries, Hansard, copies of legislation

and court judgments may need to be purchased. Very few of the countries have government speeches, policies and legislation available via a government website, and some of the existing government websites are not up-to-date. The Fiji Government website is the major exception to this. Government access to email in some countries is also very limited due to cost and availability (Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, RMI, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu). Even in countries that have better access to the internet and email, internet connectivity is not necessarily available to all government officers working with the media — access may be restricted to the departmental chief executive officer, for example.

With a few exceptions, the in-country research found that media access to government information ranges from ad hoc to difficult, and that the quality and timeliness of the information supplied varies significantly. The restriction on the flow of government information can impact on the amount and quality of local news produced. The following example is from Tonga but it illustrates the difficulty with government information flow in a number of the other countries surveyed:

If the government of Tonga can make it possible for a free flow of information instead of sitting on information at the Prime Minister's office. If they can let the people know by letting the media [have] information, then we will have 60 or 70 per cent local news, but because they keep everything secret, we have to try and find out. That's why often in order to get access to government information, you can't go through the front door, you have to climb through the window. (Editor)

The research indicates that there are considerable differences between government departments and agencies and their approaches to information dissemination in each country. One of the challenges facing government is the lack of institutional memory:

In PNG's case the lack of institutional memory and perhaps more importantly the lack of delegated authority prevents the ability of public servants to deal with the media issues that arise. How many of us in the media have followed up on stories emanating from government departments to seek a comment or clarification only to be informed the Minister is the only one able to make a statement.⁴

This is further exacerbated by the lack of whole-of-government communication and information policies that establish government–media information dissemination protocols.

There is also a view, mainly seen in small to medium countries, but also present in individual departments in larger countries, that media coverage of government information is not a priority and/or is an intrusion. Government information in these instances is not made available to the media and/or the flow of information is carefully controlled by government.

Based on feedback in the research, and the slow development of FOI in the region, it may be more appropriate, in the first instance, for Pacific Island governments to design and implement disclosure policies that apply to all government departments and agencies. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is currently exploring the feasibility of this for key regional agencies in consultation with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI).⁵

3.2 Public service broadcasting

National PSB organisations are uniquely placed to provide a range of governance programming to address a diversity of audience interests and cultural requirements. Their capacity to produce a mix of spoken-word formats (news, current affairs, magazine programs, talkback and information segments), and to provide access to the airwaves for government and NGO media producers, and their mandate to serve all demographic and cultural groups, underscore their unique role. While commercial media can be an important source of news and information, the dominance of their music formats, combined with the need to target specific profitable audiences, limits their public service capacity.

With the exception of the Cook Islands, which is currently planning to reintroduce public service radio, having privatised its PSB service in the mid-1990s, all the countries surveyed have national PSB organisations or government radio stations. Nauru, Niue, Vanuatu, Tonga and Samoa also have national public service television. With the exception of Tonga, which broadcasts regular government produced television public affairs programs, these television stations have not been major vehicles for governance content, and are dominated by entertainment programming, much of it imported.

Up to the 1990s, when commercial radio really started to develop in the region and public service and commercial television services became more established, public service and/or government

radio were the dominant media and, in some cases, the only media outlet. From the late 1980s, there was increasing pressure from government for PSB stations to become government-owned corporations so that the stations could raise more of their own income. PSB stations in Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, PNG, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are all government-owned corporations. In Nauru, Palau and RMI, the government radio stations are still part of a government department. In FSM there is legislation in place to corporatise the government stations in the four states (Pohnpei, Kosrae, Yap and Chuuk), but the radio stations are not in a position yet to operate as corporations.

The research has highlighted a number of factors that impact on the capacity of PSB stations (whether government-owned statutory authorities or part of a government department) to produce governance content that enhances public accountability and national development. It is worth noting that all these factors apply to each of the 14 countries surveyed, to varying degrees.

Legislation

PSB legislation can be dated (Fiji, PNG and the Solomon Islands) and legislation for government radio stations that are part of a department is non-existent. Much of the current legislation does not contain a clearly articulated vision for PSB operations. Instead, it usually contains generic requirements, such as the need for the public service broadcaster to 'inform, educate and entertain' all of the population; to reflect the interests and national identity of the country; and to provide adequate coverage of news and information. The *Samoa Broadcasting Corporation Act 2003* does not even contain these generic guidelines and instead includes only administrative and operational requirements. In comparison, the draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC) 2003 Bill, discussed in Chapter 14, does contain a detailed description of PSB program services.

New media environment

None of the current PSB legislation cited makes reference to the role of PSB in the emerging digital communications environment, nor does it address the role PSB might play in increasingly diverse media markets. While a few public broadcasting stations (in Fiji and the Solomon Islands) have developed and adapted to this new environment over the last decade, they have done this without legislative support.

Corporatisation

The pressure to corporatise, combined with reduced annual government subsidies, has meant that some public service stations are more focused on raising revenue and 'selling airtime' than developing their services, because revenue is essential for operational survival. They have not had the opportunity, due to this pressure and/or the lack the management capacity, to reshape their services so that they are more relevant to their target audiences. As a result, a number of PSB broadcasters are broadcasting programs that have not altered markedly in style, format or content for a number of years, despite the changing needs of their audiences and the new media environment in which they operate.

PSB funding

The government radio stations in FSM, Nauru, Palau and RMI are funded by government, and may or may not raise a small amount of additional revenue, depending on their capacity to do this. In Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Samoa and Niue, government only provides a percentage of the funds required annually by the PSB stations. This can range from around 12 per cent of the total annual operational budget to 60 per cent. Moreover, this subsidy does not appear to take into account rising annual operational costs.

In Tonga, the government has provided funds to the Tongan Broadcasting Commission (TBC) over the last two years to purchase equipment to set up its television station. Prior to this the TBC (although described as government owned) had not received an annual government allocation. The Broadcasting and Publications Authority (BPA) in Kiribati also does not receive a direct government subsidy, but government departments pay for access to broadcast time as they do on all PSB stations.

PSB stations in medium to large countries have generally had more success with raising funding from government departments and non-government sources, but this has come at a cost. Reduced annual subsidies from government have increased the pressure on PSB stations to sell airtime and production services. This in turn has meant that public service media are less accessible to government departments, NGOs and CBOs. In some countries, free airtime on PSB stations is virtually non-existent, as public broadcasting has had to become a business to survive.

None of the PSB stations in either the small, medium or large countries receives sufficient recurrent funding from government for technical maintenance, equipment replacement and upgrades, technical supplies and infrastructure. PSB station equipment can be outdated, broken down, and inadequate and studios (production and on-air) are often in need of significant overhauls to make them more functional. Lack of on-going maintenance and available technical support for the studio and transmission equipment has been an issue for well over a decade. Talkback equipment, logging equipment, adequate portable equipment (handheld recorders, computers and mobile telephones) migration to digital technologies and access to transport are other areas where there are major deficiencies. For a number of stations technical and infrastructure development is at best ad hoc, as they are dependent on the availability of donor funding for assistance. These technical deficiencies impact on the quality and quantity of their production output, and the reach and quality of their transmission.

PSB independence from government

The government stations in FSM, Nauru, Palau and RMI operate as quasi-government media units. The capacity of journalists at these stations to produce governance information is constrained by their closeness to government, as evidenced by these comments from three stations:

We tend to wait for government to identify issues. There are a lot of stories that we'd like to put out [but don't]. (RMI)

[Audience feedback indicates] they want to listen to the day-to-day operations of the government. But since we work for the government our stories are on the safe side. (Palau)

The Director of the Nauru Media Bureau said the role of its news services was to keep people well informed about activities of government, particularly in the areas of health, education, environment and agriculture.

In smaller countries such as Tuvalu and Niue, PSB legislation includes sections on independence from government. However, this does not offer sufficient separation from government. Both the Tuvalu Media Corporation (TMC) and the Broadcasting Corporation of Niue (BCN) are heavily dependent on government funding and, given the size of their economies and population bases, they are unlikely to raise significant amounts of commercial funding. The prime minister is the minister for broadcasting in both countries, and the general managers and boards at both stations are government appointed.⁶ The TMC and the BCN are also the major media outlets in their respective countries and this has the effect of increasing government focus on these organisations. The combination of market isolation, funding dependence and operational closeness to government, has not provided these stations with the level of independence they require to provide quality governance coverage. One of the results of this closeness to government also can be self-censorship, as evidenced in this comment by the leader of the opposition party in Tuvalu. He is critical of the TMC for not canvassing opposition views:

I feel frustrated with our media because they have its legislation that clearly spells out their independence and yet they cannot stand on their own feet and make decisions for themselves. They would always have to refer everything to the office of the prime minister for final approval.

In the National Integrity Systems, Country Study Report, Niue (2004), Transparency International said that the 'media ... carries the responsibility of collecting and disseminating information to the public, but this is not very effective in the case of Niue'. The reason given for this is that the *Niue Star* (the weekly newspaper) is owned by a politician and a supporter of government, and the BCN is owned by the government. The media in Niue are therefore:

Not obligated to question and publicise questionable policies of government, nor issues that are politically sensitive to the government. It is an accepted fact however, that the media can be censored at any time by a collective decision of Cabinet Ministers, although in practice, only oral threats have been issued. The views of critics on government policies and practices are sometimes expressed in the media, but in most cases, there is no obligation to make the critics' views known.⁷

The BPA in Kiribati was reportedly in a similar situation until the most recent change of government. A current parliamentarian and member of the government said of journalists at the BPA:

They used to fear about what they're going to say and write but now they have overcome that, in compliance to the rules and laws of the land of course. I see a new sense of freedom from our journalists which I believe has to do with how the government is operating.⁸

PSB organisations in countries with larger populations where the PSB station is the dominant and/or only broadcasting outlet such as Vanuatu face the same constraints as those noted for the TMC and the BCN. In Samoa, prior to the more liberal media environment of recent years, this was also the case with the national broadcaster in that country.

PSB government appointments

Government appointed PSB boards are also part of the PSB legislation in the medium to large countries. Government appoints the board, which depending on the country may or may not include government ministers and/or bureaucrats; the board then appoints the general manager with approval from the minister and/or cabinet; and the general manager is directly responsible to the board. Political influence, either directly from government and/or through the board, can seriously impact on the capacity of PSB media to fulfil their public service mandate, as evidenced in Chapter 17 on Vanuatu.

The draft SIBC 2003 Bill is the only legislation cited that potentially reduces government influence on board appointments, by requiring that the sector represented by the board member (the engineering profession, the Bar Association, religious authorities, young people's and students' associations, unions, women's representatives or media workers) nominates one or more candidates to government for its approval. Section 8 (3) of the Bill also states that board membership should represent a broad cross-section of Solomon Island society, and that no one shall be appointed to the board if he or she holds an official office in, or is an employee of, a political party or holds an elected position at any level of government.

PSB and national service

National public service radio is currently the only form of media that has the potential to reach entire Pacific Island countries, using a mix of medium wave and shortwave signals. In three-quarters of the 14 countries surveyed, 40 to 80 percent of the population lives outside major cities in rural and outer island areas. However, rural and remote areas are the least well equipped with telecommunications infrastructure and facilities. The distribution of television and newspapers to these areas is variable to non-existent. Newspapers require dependable infrastructure, roads, transport and easy access to population centres – all of which is a challenge in rural and outer island areas. Television distribution requires investment in transmitters (terrestrial and/or satellite) and communities with electricity and receivers.

However, national public service radio's stated aim of serving the nation falls far short of this in practice. Broadcasters in only five countries, Tonga, Samoa, RMI, Palau and FSM, said they had the capacity to reach the whole country, while the Solomon Islands and Niue reported some blind spots and areas not served. It should be noted, however, that none of the PSB services have the resources to conduct an extensive technical survey to ascertain their exact coverage. PSB services in the other countries had one or more of the following problems: unable to reach all rural areas, partial or full lack of coverage to outer islands, and poor shortwave signal for periods of the day.

Added to this is the fact that very few of the public service broadcasters are decentralised – they still operate on dominant centre-periphery lines, with the organisation and broadcasting focus being metropolitan-based. PNG and the Solomon Islands are the only two countries that have regional stations that produce local content along with transmitting the national signal. However, in both countries, lack of resources is a continuing challenge for the operation of these stations.⁹ For the most part, national PSB stations are poorly resourced to reflect the issues of communities in rural and outer island areas, and unable to produce content to meet the needs of these culturally diverse communities.

Other factors are also contributing to the lack of PSB reach:

- As noted, earlier, equipment to assist journalists and producers become more portable, such as laptop computers, mobile telephones, hand-held recorders, Internet/email access and transport is very limited.
- While some newspapers reported that they had engaged stringer journalists to cover rural areas, the majority of PSB stations have not done this. This is despite having access to government, NGO and church workers who regularly work in these areas who could be trained to provide news inputs.

- The national stations in Fiji and PNG only broadcast in two major vernacular languages and English, and the other PSB stations surveyed only broadcast in the major vernacular language and English. Decentralised regional stations are needed to provide content relevant to the interests of rural and outer island populations and to cater for linguistic diversity, but there is little evidence of government incentives to encourage this.

The combination of these three factors, plus, the centre-periphery orientation of the PSB stations and a critical absence of audience research,¹⁰ means that the PSB stations are not doing enough to inform themselves about the interests of rural and outer island communities.

PSB future directions

The Fiji Government in 2003 decided to put PSB content (Fijian and Hindustani) out to tender and award one of these services to a commercial radio network and the other to the national public broadcaster.¹¹ This raises questions about the future of PSB stations, not the least of which is how they would remain sustainable without this content. The Samoan government, like the Fiji government, has defined a package of content as community and public service content and only funds the provision of this on the national PSB station. It also intends to privatise the national radio and television service, but there are no details available on whether a public service obligation will be included.

3.3 Media regulation and government

One of the principles listed earlier refers to the need for independent regulatory bodies — at arm's length from government — to ensure that broadcast licensing and media regulation processes are as fair and apolitical as possible. Currently the Cook Islands and Fiji are the only countries developing legislation to introduce an independent licensing authority. In six countries, broadcasting is the direct responsibility of the prime minister — the Cook Islands, Niue, PNG, Tuvalu, Tonga and Vanuatu. In Vanuatu the national public broadcaster, the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC), is in the unique position of being the regulator, which is potentially a conflict of interest as it advises on licences for possible competitors. In other countries, such as the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu, the Prime Minister is responsible for public broadcasting, while commercial broadcasting is the responsibility of the minister who oversees telecommunications.

Some Pacific governments have developed legislation to regulate the media. The draft Cook Islands Media Bill 2004, like the proposed Broadcasting Bill in Fiji, updates existing media legislation, sets out content guidelines and standards to be included in licence conditions and, as noted, establishes an independent licensing authority. There has been very little media industry feedback on the Cook Islands Media Bill.¹² By comparison, the draft Fiji Media Bill 2003 met with considerable industry opposition, as it proposed to replace the independent industry body, the Fiji Media Council, with a government-appointed body. In its submission to the Fiji government, Fiji Times Limited said:

*News media in South Pacific countries, as in many other nations, have often faced criticism of professional and ethical standards. The criticism focuses on the lack of professional training of journalists, poor education standards, lack of knowledge of political and social institutions, cultural insensitivities and a questionable grasp of ethical issues. We encourage the Fiji Government to work **with** the existing Media Council (Fiji) Limited to resolve these problems and perceptions. Control and regulation are inappropriate. The way forward is to improve the training and standard of journalism in Fiji, to which we are committed. Improvements in journalism in the region will only come from a government commitment to freedom of speech aimed at encouraging freethinking, inquiring minds and a quest for truth. This can be achieved through journalists with the courage, determination and freedom to promote and provoke open discussion of issues like the unity theme, nation building and reconciliation.¹³*

The Kiribati *Newspaper Registration (Amended) Act 2002* and Tonga's *Media Operators Act 2003* and *Newspaper Act 2003* gave government the power to licence newspapers for the first time in both countries, and to refuse and/or cancel licences for newspapers that did not meet requirements set down by government in the legislation. Prior to introducing these Acts, the Tongan government amended the Constitution in 2003 and included subclauses that restricted freedom of the press. In Kiribati the *Newspaper Act 1998* had only required newspapers to be registered with government, but government amended this in 2002 following the commencement of the first independent newspaper in the country.

In 2004 the Supreme Court of Tonga ruled that the *Media Operators Act 2003* and *Newspaper Act 2003* were unconstitutional and that the constitutional amendment was invalid as it was inconsistent with the guarantees in the Constitution for a free press. In making this ruling the court said that a feature of this legislation was that the potential restrictions were so broadly expressed and open to interpretation that ‘a person cannot be sure whether or not what he writes may result in prosecution or even imprisonment’.¹⁴ This was also the problem with the Kiribati legislation. In 2004, the new Kiribati government struck out the restrictive provisions in the 2002 Act.

It is not unusual for Pacific governments to criticise the media as a result of media coverage of government and call for increased media regulation.¹⁵ This criticism often stems from a fundamental misunderstanding of the role of media in democracy, and that critical and/or analytical reporting is in the national interest. Another aspect of the difficulty facing Pacific governments and the media, as seen in Section 3.2 above on PSB legislation, and in the discussion in Section 3.4 on local content and community service requirements, is that much of the existing media legislation does not provide the level of clarity required about expected media services and standards. As such it leaves the media vulnerable to government attack, when government perceives that the media is not operating in a professional manner and/or when the government perceives that it is being unfairly criticised. In the report *The Media in Governance* the Department for International Development (DFID) in the United Kingdom makes the following useful observation about the necessary balance between media freedom and control:

*The media can be a major force for improving the quality of government in developing and transitional countries ... To fulfil this role the media need room to manoeuvre — tight government regulation and censorship produce media which are ineffective and lacking in credibility. Too little regulation, on the other hand, may lead to the domination of commercial media ruled by advertising, to the detriment of serious content and of the interests of those without purchasing power ... What is needed are policies that impose responsibilities as well as freedoms on the commercial sector, and that clarify and facilitate the role of the public service media.*¹⁶

3.4 Local content and community service requirements

There are, as noted, general requirements for local program content in some PSB legislation. However, the requirements for commercial broadcast licences mainly relate to economic and technical capacity. It is also interesting to note that commercial media is often covered in telecommunications legislation, not broadcasting legislation. In its report on Fiji media legislation in 1996, the Thomson Foundation noted that broadcast licences are awarded to grant operating rights to frequencies and transmitter locations and do not contain specific program service requirements. This is the norm in the countries surveyed. The exception is PNG, where there are some local content quotas for commercial media (although this is not evident in the licence application form). However, due to the lack of a regulatory body to monitor these requirements, licences can be renewed even if the requirements are not met. This illustrates another issue with some of the existing legislation; that it may involve the establishment of processes, monitoring bodies and/or reporting requirements, which are then not implemented or complied with.

Since the 1980s, as television has developed in the region, Pacific governments have made numerous statements about the need for local content, particularly on television.¹⁷ However, this has not been accompanied by the necessary legislation. In Fiji the sole national television broadcaster was awarded a 12-year exclusive licence and was only required to produce 10 per cent local content. The lack of guidelines on what constitutes local content has also meant that national commercial television stations (Fiji and PNG) categorise overseas programs topped and tailed by local presenters as local content.

Broadcasting organisations, as opposed to newspapers, have historically been licensed because the airwaves are a finite resource and therefore access to the airwaves is considered a privilege that brings with it certain responsibilities. This responsibility becomes even more critical in the Pacific countries surveyed, as the majority of them are media- and communications-poor. In the Solomon Islands, for example, with a population of just over half a million people and an estimated 65 plus languages, the one national broadcaster, which broadcasts in English and Pijin, has a signal that cannot be picked up reliably throughout the country all day. The two FM music stations do not broadcast to the entire country and target specific audiences in English only. The daily newspaper (Monday to Friday) prints 2000 copies and the weekly newspaper prints 1000 copies, with both newspapers published in English and not distributed throughout the country. The RMI has a smaller population, 57,738, but comparatively it also has limited local news and information sources — a

weekly private newspaper that prints 3300 copies, and one government radio station and one commercial radio station that produce small amounts of local news. These media use English and Marshallese, and the government station is the only media outlet with the capacity to reach all the outer islands.

It could be argued that a broadcast licence in media-poor countries is even more of a privilege and it is essential that local content and community service requirements be included as part of the licence conditions for commercial radio and television. This would provide government departments, NGOs and CBOs with access to key demographic groups and encourage them to use commercial media in addition to the PSB stations. It is interesting to note that the research indicates that these sectors have been slow to use commercial radio, despite the fact that these media target the 18–40 age group, which constitutes up to 40 per cent of the population in some Pacific Island countries.

Government department and NGO access to commercial and public service television has also proved particularly difficult, due to the costs involved and the apparent rigidity of commercial program schedules. Local content quotas and community service requirements for television need to address these issues to be meaningful.

As noted, the legislation being developed by Fiji and the Cook Islands to establish independent regulatory authorities includes content guidelines and program standards. It remains to be seen whether there will be specific local quotas for different programming categories, such as music, news and information, community service announcements and information, children's content, drama and advertisements.

3.5 Alternative media

Community radio and, to a lesser extent, community television are very well established in countries like Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada. They provide an important media outlet for a diverse range of community groups and interests, and complement the mainstream media. In the Pacific, community media have been slow to develop. Community radio currently operates only in PNG, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, the Cook Islands and Vanuatu. Seven of the outer islands in the Cook Islands have community television stations, and Community Television Nadi (CTV) in Fiji is no longer operational. The cable television stations in FSM, Palau and RMI have a local access channel, but these stations do not produce their own local content or feature significant amounts of local content produced by other organisations.

The lack of legislative provisions for community radio or television, and the requirement for community media operators to pay the same licence fee as commercial media (Fiji and Vanuatu), have been obstacles to their development.

With the advancement in cost-effective, easy-to-use digital broadcasting equipment, community radio could be a valuable communications vehicle in rural areas and outer islands, as it can provide access to the media for linguistically diverse communities. The success of the rural community email station network, the People First Network (PFnet) in the Solomon Islands, which is discussed in Chapter 14, provides a model for rural community radio networks. PFnet combines government, donor and community input to establish the stations and make them operational. A factor in the sustainability of PFnet is that the individual email stations are hosted by provincial clinics, schools or NGOs. The existing community stations also have parent organisations — the NGO fem'LINKpacific in Fiji, the Catholic Church in the Solomon Islands, a secondary college and Island councils in the Cook Islands, a provincial education department in Vanuatu, and in PNG, which has the largest number of community radio stations, the stations are run by NGOs, a university, the Catholic Church and mining companies. Sustainability is an important issue for community media, and this needs to be addressed along with legislative provisions, if community media are to develop in the Pacific.

4. MEDIA SECTOR

4.1 Media organisations

There is an enormous variety of media in the Pacific countries surveyed, ranging from small PSB stations like Radio Sunshine in Niue and Radio Tuvalu, which operate more along the lines of community radio stations, to the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited (FBCL) and Communications Fiji Limited (CFL), which operate six and five radio stations respectively. There is similar variety

among the print media, ranging from the fortnightly FSM not-for-profit newspaper, the *Kaselehlie Press*, with two journalists and an editor, to the PNG *Post-Courier*, published five days a week, with 42 journalists.

The largest number of mainstream media outlets¹⁸ are in Fiji and PNG, although on a per capita basis Fiji is much better served than PNG. Small markets like FSM, Kiribati, Palau, Nauru, RMI and Tuvalu have a limited range of media outlets and, as noted, even larger medium-sized countries like the Solomon Islands have only five mainstream news-producing media. It is worth noting, however, that Tonga is an exception to this. With an estimated population of only 108,000, Tonga has 11 weekly, fortnightly or monthly newspapers, some of which are produced by church organisations, one PSB service (radio and television), four commercial radio stations, one commercial television station and one pay television service.

Countries with one or more of the following characteristics face particular challenges supporting diverse media markets:

- A small population base.
- Developing or least developing country status with a small percentage of the population employed in the formal sector. Commercial media, in particular, rely on attracting audiences and/or readers of interest to advertisers.
- Over 50 per cent of the population living outside metropolitan centres that are poorly served by transport and telecommunications.

Pacific Island governments, national and regional media associations, and regional institutions, need to give more consideration to how to encourage and sustain media diversity in countries with these characteristics.

While media capacity differs between countries, the research has identified a number of capacity-building issues that are common, to differing degrees, in all of the countries. Some of these issues have already been raised in relation to PSB stations, but they are noted again here because of their impact on all media. The following sections will explore these.

4.2 Urban-centred media

In the majority of countries surveyed, local news programs are largely metropolitan sourced and produced. This is the result of a combination of factors: limited resources to travel to rural and outer island areas; the length of time required to travel to these areas and the inability to release journalists from their other duties to do this; the lack of stringer networks in rural areas and outer islands; very limited to non-existent portable technical resources (mobile phones and laptops) and access to email to enable journalists to file stories from the field; and difficulties with accessing reliable communications in non-urban areas. The Fiji Times Limited employs stringers in some rural and outer island areas, and both the major dailies in PNG have offices with journalists outside the capital of Port Moresby. However, with the exception of a few other Fiji and PNG media outlets, there are very few other examples of this in the research.

As noted above, commercial imperatives also mean that non-government media have to target profitable audiences and these are more likely to be in urban areas.

The mainstream media's impact outside urban areas is further restricted by the use of the major vernacular language (or two vernacular languages in the case of PNG and Fiji) and English only, and limitations with distribution and/or transmission to rural areas and outer islands.

4.3 Target audiences and research

The main response to the question of target audiences from media respondents in small to medium markets (with the exception of commercial radio stations) was that they were aiming for a general audience or everybody. Media in Fiji and PNG were much more specific about target age groups, and they were also the most likely to have conducted audience surveys. However, even in these large markets, some media have not done this as they find the cost prohibitive. There were very few examples of audience research in other countries and, where this had been conducted, it was generally on a one-off basis (for example, the *Daily Post*, Vanuatu; the SIBC, Solomon Islands; and the TBC in Tonga).

The majority of media respondents rely on informal audience feedback, letters to the editor, phone calls, and so on, to get a sense of what their various audiences are interested in. Cost, lack of human resources and lack of time were the main reasons cited for not conducting surveys. Other

reasons were that the organisation was the only media and/or the dominant media in the country and saw no need to undertake a survey, or that the smallness of the country meant that informal feedback was easily accessible and sufficient for this purpose. One of the government radio stations commented that it had done a survey 20 years ago, and now thought another one could be useful as there was more media competition in the market. Very few government and NGO media producers interviewed for the survey had conducted a formal survey to ascertain the effectiveness of their media content because they lacked the capacity to do this.

The striking feature about the many of the media responses is their apparent lack of interest in audience research due to the media organisation's market position and/or their belief that anecdotal information will suffice. As a result, the targeting or otherwise of media content is based on a number of assumptions about audience interests and listening, viewing and reading patterns.

The lack of audience research poses a particular problem for public service broadcasting. PSB stations in a number of countries now face competition for the 18 to 40 year old audience from FM commercial music stations.¹⁹ However, with the one or two exceptions, the PSB stations have been particularly slow to undertake the research required to redefine their programming to appeal to this significant audience target group.

Media organisations, national and regional media associations and universities, also appear to have given little consideration to developing more affordable survey methodology. For example, one respondent suggested a low-cost survey format for Pacific media in small to medium countries, which would involve senior school or university students undertaking the research.

4.4 Journalism training and professional development

A number of issues emerged that impact on the capacity of journalists in all countries surveyed to produce good-quality reporting on governance issues.

Journalism numbers

One of the main constraints on producing more local news and/or current affairs programs listed by media organisations was the number of journalists. In Fiji, the Fiji Times Limited employs 52 journalists and publishes six different newspapers (one of which is an annual newspaper) and the FBCL has 17 journalists and six radio stations. The *National* in PNG has 30 journalists and produces a daily paper (Monday to Friday). However, these large news-producing media organisations are the exception rather than the norm. The usual number of journalists employed by an individual media organisation, including some media in Fiji and PNG, is between one and six, with PSB stations and newspapers generally employing larger numbers of journalists than commercial FM music stations. In Samoa, for example, Radio Polynesia, which operates four FM music stations, employs one news director/journalist, while the public broadcaster, the SBC, employs five journalists to produce television and radio news.

The number of journalists employed also does not necessarily reflect the size of the population and country to be served. Vanuatu has a population of around 200,000 and four news-producing media that employ a total of 26 journalists. Palau has a small population of around 20,000 and five news-producing media employing 13 journalists. In comparison, the Solomon Islands, with a population of just over 500,000, has five news-producing media outlets employing a total of only 16 journalists.

While it needs to be stressed that there are very capable small news-producing media organisations in the countries surveyed, it is also the case that, for some media, having a small number of journalists can exacerbate the urban focus of the news and the reliance on a limited number of sources, as journalists concentrate on finding the most easily accessible news.

Journalism recruitment

The need to increase the available pool of qualified journalists and raise education levels of recruits is evident in all countries. Currently, in some countries, journalism recruits do not always need to have completed high school. Overall a variety of recruitment levels exist in different countries (and between different media within each country) and this makes it very difficult to devise regional standards for certain grades or levels of journalism.

Media organisations in Fiji and in some medium-sized countries said that they would like to recruit cadets with tertiary journalism qualifications; however, this is not always feasible as qualified cadets may not be available. PNG, with two universities teaching journalism, has lead the way in this area.

The USP has centres in 12 countries, but it is only possible to study journalism units for a diploma or a degree at its main campus in Suva, Fiji.²⁰

The minimum qualification in Fiji for cadets is completion of Form 6, the final high school year. In RMI completion of a high school diploma is also the minimum requirement, whereas in the Solomon Islands, recruits can have completed Forms 5, 6 or 7.²¹ The exception is the daily newspaper, the *Solomon Star*, where journalists mainly have tertiary qualifications. The TMC in Tuvalu recruits school leavers with a minimum of Form 4 education, and in Tonga the minimum education level is Form 7. In Palau a major private newspaper recruits journalists from overseas due to the lack of qualified journalists in-country. Media organisations in PNG have a preference for recruits with a diploma or degree in journalism.

It is difficult for media organisations with small numbers of journalists to release them for full-time study and, to date Pacific universities have not developed more flexible delivery mechanisms for journalism and media education, mainly due to a lack of resources. Flexible delivery modes that enable students and working journalists to study on- and off-campus are needed so that journalists do not have to take leave or resign to study on-campus.

The limited number of available qualified journalists was a particular concern for some media organisations in small to medium-sized countries:

The staff that work for me were just picked out of the streets because they knocked on the door asking for a job. If they can write and ask a few questions, well that's all we need. We cannot discriminate and be choosy about those we employ because we just haven't reached the stage yet where we have a pool of skilled/qualified journalists to choose from. The media are not effective even though they are trying to do it. They need trained personnel. (Kiribati)

Cadet training

There were very few instances reported of structured in-house cadet training programs delivered by individual media organisations. Where this exists, it is generally limited to a few media organisations in Fiji, PNG and Samoa. In small and medium-sized countries, cadet training programs are mainly unstructured and ad hoc. There are exceptions, like the Catholic newspaper in Tonga, *Tauma'u Lelei*, which does offer cadets a range of programs. However, the main finding in the research is that in a number of media organisations cadet journalists have to learn through practice and observation. This can be very challenging when there are only a few journalists (for example, two commercial radio stations in the Solomon Islands each have only one journalist, and the weekly newspaper has one senior journalist and one cadet). Similarly, in Pohnpei the station manager at a commercial FM station is also the journalist, but he has no formal qualifications and is teaching himself journalism on the job.

While it is true that larger media organisations, like those in Fiji and PNG, have the advantage of being able to access a greater number of experienced journalists who can act as trainers and/or mentors to cadets, in each country surveyed (with the exception of Nauru) there are experienced senior journalists who could act as mentors and trainers. In the case of Tuvalu, one works at the TMC, while others are former TMC journalists working for government and/or NGOs. Moreover, some of these senior journalists, with appropriate training accreditation, could deliver accredited tertiary-level subjects in-country.

Many of the media surveyed (with the exception of those in FSM, RMI, Nauru and Palau), have had access to a number of donor-funded training activities, some for well over a decade, yet there appears to be a serious lack of capacity and/or incentive to develop industry-wide, basic on-the-job training for journalism recruits, which is delivered either by the media organisation or by an educational institution. Three examples of this type of initiative are the Journalism Association of Western Samoa (JAWS), which was instrumental in establishing the Certificate of Journalism Achievement at the Samoa Polytechnic; the Media Association of the Solomon Islands (MASI), which has received UNESCO funding to implement train-the-trainer workshops so in-country trainers can deliver journalism and media training; and Fiji media organisations that have discussed the feasibility of establishing an accredited basic journalism course at the Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT).

For at least a decade there has been a need for an accredited basic journalism certificate that is recognised throughout the region, but there have not been enough people in the media industry and/or at educational institutional level championing this. Donor-funded short courses have been relied on for this training, but they are by their nature ad hoc and are not able to provide the foundation in journalism practice that a 12-month accredited program can.

Staff development

Three other human resource issues emerged in research: (a) the lack of regular staff assessment and appraisal outside the larger markets; (b) limited professional development opportunities and career paths for journalists; and (c) the lack of specialist postgraduate university courses for mid- to senior-level journalists (such as a one-year or two-year postgraduate course), which would equip the journalists with specialist reporting and/or management skills. The combined impact of this is that the media sector can lose bright young journalists to other sectors because they see no future for themselves within the organisations and, of equal concern, some journalists are not extended and do not reach their full capacity, and this impacts on the quality of the news produced.

4.5 Journalism standards

The news content analysis found that there is an overwhelming reliance on government-sourced news and news stories that use single sources in all the countries surveyed (see Chapter Three, Pacific News Content Analysis, for details). A fundamental principal of good journalism is that stories contain multiple sources. This is necessary if news is to be well researched, fair and balanced. A Thomson Foundation consultant working in Samoa made the following observation about the standard of news reporting which is also applicable to some of the media in the other countries surveyed:

The most common complaints mentioned concerned basic errors of detail, ignorance of the law, failure to confirm facts, corroborate allegations, or to observe the rules of journalistic confidence; and poor editing of articles or broadcasts. Fairness and balance were also issues raised in relation to editorial matters ...²²

A fundamental problem, related to this, is the difficulty some journalists have following up sources:

Sometimes [our reporters] will get just two stories [in one day] and that's it. The staff is adequate. It's the willingness to go out and be aggressive. When they telephone around if the answer they receive is 'no news' they don't question further [to dig out a story]. There is more news available. (RMI)

Government departments and NGO respondents also expressed frustration with what they described as 'unquestioning', 'passive' and 'shy' journalists. One senior government interviewee in Tonga gave the example of holding press conferences in which the media present where reluctant to ask questions. As a result he has become less interested in arranging press conferences. The following comments refer to another aspect of this problem — journalists who do not proactively seek out the news:

When you talk about staffing needs and people coming and going, we lack that dedicated person to come in and churn and churn, churn and get the factory going. People that we can go to and look over their shoulder and say, how many stories have you got, and they can tell us they've got six so far, great keep going. (Cook Islands)

The reporters don't get enough stories. The two reporters may only do two to three stories each per issue. I tell them to get government releases and follow up to develop stories, but they don't always do it. (FSM)

At the same time, as noted, there are some very experienced journalists who understand the need for research and balance:

[When we first started all the news was] like a five-minute story on a workshop ... Now it's got to a stage where I'm proud of what we do and I know we can do better and I'm more confident and we can pick up on the harder issues. Sometimes it's hard for TV to get the harder issues because they can't get anything if someone's not going to talk ... so if we don't we push for as long as we can to get somebody, anybody to say something and if we can't then we just have to let it go, we can't do it. (Cook Islands)

We want to serve as an avenue for people to raise their concerns and express their opinions. We also strive for fair reporting and balance. For example, the government has done something wrong and despite it being the major shareholder, we will highlight the fault and also give them an opportunity to respond before printing the story. There have been instances previously where a story on the government was run today with the idea of getting a reaction from government tomorrow. Maybe it was a move to attract the reader, but what we are doing now is getting both sides of the story today. (Fiji)

I believe the questions that are being put to the media to re-look at its stance because at times we could probably be driven by the political whims, manipulators, people who have hidden agendas and we are coming back to realise that there has to be a balance in everything. Gone are the days where we play a comment on air today and we look for a response tomorrow. (Fiji)

These comments help to explain two apparently contradictory themes that emerged in response to the question on media contacts with government and NGOs:

- Journalists are in regular contact with the more media-active NGOs (usually just a small number) and key government departments, and, in large countries, have established rounds of government departments and agencies.
- At the same time, a number of media responses, and responses from government departments and NGOs surveyed, suggested that the media waited to be contacted and were not proactive, and that some media use a high percentage of the press releases issued by government verbatim. This practice is also likely to have contributed to the government-sourced and single-source finding in the news content analysis.

At the same time, it does need to be noted, that some journalists can become discouraged by the lack of access to government information, and this impacts on their capacity and willingness to follow-up government stories.

4.6 Investigative journalism

There are very few investigative journalists in the countries surveyed, and this is regardless of the size of the media organisation. For example, of the FBCL's 17 journalists, only one is an investigative journalist, while the *Marshall Islands Journal* has four journalists, one of whom is an investigative journalist. Time required to develop investigative stories was one factor impacting on this; another was the lack of journalists with specialist qualifications in areas such as economics, business, politics, the environment and health; and a third factor relates to the political environment the media organisation operates in. It is very difficult, as noted earlier, for government-funded radio stations in Nauru, Palau, FSM and RMI to produce content that could be potentially critical of government, and this is also the case for some PSB stations. One journalist commented:

Things operate differently here ... You don't out public officials publicly for their misdeeds, this will not lead to better governance. This will only lead to no governance because as a reporter you will be shut down in any number of ways. There is another way of doing it and that is the way that we have to deal with every day. You can get the news out without hurting people.²³

There is a misconception, based on some Western examples that investigative journalism is by its nature aggressive, critical and 'hurtful'. Good investigative journalism is well researched and sourced, and does not need to be aggressive. It requires a certain level of skills and training to be done well, as this comment from a news director indicates:

Maybe 10 years ago we were not fully equipped ... to carry out investigative journalism. But now, with all the information that we have, and also with proper journalism training we have now the media are holding people in public offices to account to ensure these issues are broadcast rather than swept under the carpet. (Fiji)

Some of the media respondents in smaller countries felt that investigative journalism was difficult to undertake due to the smallness of their communities and that fact that journalists have to live there. It is also likely in these countries that the government sector will be very prominent and that the corporate and civil society sectors are relatively small and not major sources of news. These are important issues for journalists and would benefit from further discussion on how best to develop quality journalism practices of relevance to smaller communities.

4.7 Governance issues

A number of media, government and NGO respondents saw governance mainly in terms of government transparency and accountability, and did not define the topics they covered as 'governance'. This comment from the researcher in the Marshall Islands highlights this issue:

With the exception of one or two people interviewed for this survey, virtually no one appeared to understand the term 'governance issues'. When asked about their priority governance issues, the response was usually a long pause. When prompted with the list of usually identified governance issues (women in development, health, education, poverty, financial management), it usually elicited a limited response repeating a few of the mentioned items.

This suggests that most government departments, the government radio station and some NGOs do not understand the meanings and implications of governance. It is fair to say that most leaders and many others in the Marshall Islands view governance issues as limited to financial accountability.

Despite what, in many instances, were fairly vague responses to the term governance, in practice a number of media organisations and some government and NGO media producers do produce media content that covers the broadly defined governance and public policy issues listed earlier. Again, this happens more extensively in larger countries like Fiji and PNG, in part because the more competitive media environment in these countries encourages this level of journalism:

Basically good governance and highlighting issues on how our country is governed is very essential for any media organisation and for journalists to understand the issues is also very important. Our main objective in the newsroom is to hold people accountable for whatever actions they have done. If you are a public office holder, you should be held accountable not because we think you should be held accountable, but because the taxpayers think you should be held accountable. Things like honesty and integrity is always paramount in any government that is in power, in any government department. That's what drives us. At the end of the day, the number of stories that exposes these issues and we've got issues coming from Parliament, issues from Annual Reports, issues from people highlighting allegations of corruption and the recent scams that we have covered. (Fiji)

But there are also examples from other countries:

We attempt to highlight/publicise issues and areas of governance that are being neglected, ignored or mismanaged. For example, there does not appear to be general acceptance in government of the increasing level of poverty evident in the urban centres, and the need to address this relatively new development. We've given major play to some of our own independent investigations into violence and poverty, as well as publishing significant portions of studies conducted in the RMI about these issues. We've seen serious problems in the Ministry of Justice/public safety, which we've focused on at length in an effort to generate discussion and change. Health concerns, such as the RMI's high rate of suicides, and the threat of HIV/AIDS, have also been addressed ... On a regular basis, the newspaper publishes reports from government audits about government spending and problems identified in the use of government money to ensure public awareness. (RMI)

Our priority governance issue probably turns around the government. As the last Ombudsman has been very quiet, we inherited again the role of watchdog over the government in the country. We deal with corruption. We also are ready to assist any NGO who wants to publish some articles on their work matters [such] as governance, health or women. (Vanuatu)

The issue of the quality of governance coverage was also raised, as this comment from a news director in Fiji illustrates:

I think we're covering the issues. It's the depth that we lack. There is a feeling in the community that there is a lot of corruption, abuse of office, police admit that white collar crime is on the rise, shady dealings when it comes to contracts, tenders, etc, I think the media tends to dwell on these sensational governance issues. There are a lot of governance issues out there, sometimes I think these aren't recognised as governance issues — constitution, board appointments, the environment, we tend to look at the environment ... rather than what the hell are the people in control of the city councils, leaders in the community doing about keeping the place clean — there's a lot of discussions around police and the army ... Governance, because of the word itself, many people tend to look at it something identified only with the government, it's not, it goes with every political party that's out there.

Some senior media respondents and government respondents also said that journalists required a better understanding of government and legislative processes so that they could report more effectively on government. It was felt that there is a deficiency in this area, particularly with journalists who are school leavers and have not completed further study in politics.

Over the last decade a few Pacific countries (Fiji, PNG, and the Solomon Islands) have experienced significant civil disruption. This can impact on the quality of governance reporting, as this comment from a journalist in the Solomon Islands illustrates:

[It is] challenging in that there are areas that I must struggle to penetrate to get the right information to give out to the public; the ethnic tension period was especially difficult because

it was risky to pursue facts. For instance, we could not attribute stories to anyone because the moment you do that, you put at risk that person's life. You know, getting the true facts as far as possible to balance stories was both difficult and risky. It's also challenging because you are not getting things out as best as the population expects you to, especially when the facts you need are very difficult to get.

The lack of journalism training and a commitment to investigative journalism, referred to earlier, also means that some journalists do not have the necessary knowledge or skills to adequately report on and analyse a crisis situation.

Another challenge facing journalists covering governance issues is the fact that Pacific Island governments can be very critical of what they perceive as reporting that is not in the national interest. There have been a number of instances of Pacific Island journalists being threatened verbally and/or physically as a result of stories that have been published or broadcast (Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa and PNG). However, survey respondents gave few examples of governments withdrawing funds (for advertising or as part of annual PSB subsidies) due to concerns about editorial content. Although there were some examples of government not advertising with certain media, such as in Tonga, neither the *Matangi Tonga* nor the *Kele'a* (which only commenced in 2004) has received government advertising.

It is interesting to note, given donor interest in governance projects in the region, that the majority of media respondents have not received donor funding to support coverage of governance projects and issues. One of the few examples was from PNG, where AusAID provided funds for the War on Corruption campaign for all members of the Media Council of PNG in 2002; UNICEF sponsored the International Children's Broadcasting Day; and the British High Commission is currently sponsoring the Civic Education campaign. The other example is from the Solomon Islands, where the national public service broadcaster and the daily newspaper received a range of donor funding for media content during civil disruption and a gun buy-back period.

4.8 Industry self-regulation

The paucity of journalism codes of ethics and industry complaints processes leaves the media vulnerable to government criticism and impacts on the quality of journalism. Only four countries surveyed have a code of ethics that has been developed and adopted across the industry, and only three countries have public complaints processes. The leaders in this field are the Media Council of Papua New Guinea and the Fiji Media Council both of which have developed industry-wide codes of ethics and have a public complaints process in place. More recently, Tonga's Media Council Incorporated has also developed an industry-wide code of ethics and established a complaints committee. The national media association in Samoa, JAWS, has developed an industry-wide code of ethics and is investigating the feasibility of a complaints body. In the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu the national media associations have a draft code of ethics for journalists, but approval for both codes is taking some time.

A few media organisations in the North Pacific have adopted an international code, such as the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists, but not all media in this sub-region have a code of ethics. Media in Tuvalu, Nauru, Kiribati and the Cook Islands do not have an industry-developed code of ethics and, apart from some general guidelines, do not appear to be using codes of ethics from other countries. Kiribati has recently established a national media association, which plans to develop a code of ethics.

It is very difficult for some of the smaller countries to establish and sustain national media associations, and this raises the question of who should take the lead and develop codes of ethics for the media in these countries. Moreover, this is not just an issue for smaller countries — in some medium-sized countries national media associations have waxed and waned for more than a decade and have not proved themselves effective vehicles for industry self-regulation.

Of equal concern is the fact that, while media organisations may have a code of ethics, they do not have internal organisational mechanisms to ensure that this code is observed and enforced. A number of responses to this question in all countries indicate a serious lack of clarity about how individual media organisations adopt, monitor and enforce the codes of ethics, and how they deal with breaches to the code.

The President of PINA sees national media associations as the way forward to ensure the needs and development of the Pacific Islands media are internally and nationally driven rather than relying on 'programs driven by aid programs based outside the region'. The importance of strong national media associations cannot be understated. In addition to codes of ethics and complaints processes,

these associations can set training agendas for the industry and assist professional development. However, the research found that with a few exceptions, most national associations and the media they represent lack the incentive necessary to ensure that these associations become sustainable. Some of the respondents said that what was needed was a paid staff member and an office. At the same time, it could be argued that, if journalists in countries that may have only five small media outlets cannot develop and adopt a code of ethics in such a small media environment, there are fundamental issues to be addressed as to why this is the case, and a paid staff member would not necessarily help this situation.

The two regional media associations — the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA) and the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) — have now merged into one regional association, PINA.²⁴ PINA has a vital role to play in developing professional journalism standards across the region and in assisting national media associations to become more effective and sustainable. It will be establishing its new organisational structure and renewing relationships with its members and stakeholders through most of 2005, and will in turn require support from its member organisations to achieve these goals.

5. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

The government in each country surveyed produces a range of media content. The main government media content is through press releases, public service radio programs, newspaper articles and, to a lesser extent, video production. Government newsletters are also used to communicate with other government departments and key stakeholders, but are not necessarily circulated to the media.

5.1. Media capacity

Media capacity varies considerably, with much less government capacity in some small to medium-sized countries such as the Cook Islands, FSM, Nauru, Niue, Palau, RMI, the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. The PNG government departments produce the most media of any government, and Fiji, Samoa and Tonga each have some strong media-producing government departments (radio, print and/or television), while in Kiribati seven of the twelve ministries produce regular programs on the national public radio service.

The research found that the 14 governments have a mix of some or all of the following:

- A central government media or information unit located within the prime minister's or president's office that may or may not liaise with other government departments (FSM, Kiribati, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Tonga). In Fiji, the Information Services Division is part of the Ministry of Information, Communications and Media Relations (MICMR), and in PNG, this unit is part of the Department of State Enterprises and Information (DSEI). The Information Services Division in Fiji is the best resourced (human, technical, and financial) and the most productive.
- A quasi-information unit through a government radio station (FSM, Nauru, Palau and RMI).
- A press secretary for the prime minister or president and/or a senior departmental officer who acts in this role. In some countries this officer will have journalism experience (Kiribati, Fiji, FSM, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), but in other countries these officers have no journalism experience (Niue, Palau, RMI, Tonga, and Tuvalu).
- Information or media officers within individual departments. The majority of these are in PNG departments and PNG also has the largest number of government media officers who are trained journalists. Government departments in other countries may have an officer who is authorised to work with the media, and/or a chief executive officer who deals with any media enquiries. These officers, as opposed to the press secretaries, generally have little or no media experience.
- Media units with at least two full-time media officers in individual government departments that produce a range of media content on a regular basis. These units tend to be in a few particularly media-active departments, such as health, agriculture and education, and focus on community education and promotion, and generally do not deal with policy issues. These are usually handled by the minister and/or departmental head.

The pattern of government information listed above can vary depending on the political environment. Factors that impact on this are a change of government, economic fluctuations,

major national disruption, public sector reform and key officers leaving. The apparent lack of ongoing institutional commitment to government communication strategies and the resources required to support these, leaves government media units and officers vulnerable to these factors. This was evidenced during the survey, when the new Cook Islands government downgraded the central government media unit, GovMedia, by delaying the appointment of a new GovMedia Director. The unit subsequently stopped updating the government website and issuing press releases.²⁴ Prior to this GovMedia had been one of the more effective government media units, and its website contained a number of recently released press releases. In the Solomon Islands, the national government media unit has struggled to be functional over the last decade because of varying levels of commitment by different governments to its operation, and the lack of a government communications strategy which clearly articulates its role in relation to all government departments. In PNG, the newly established Department of State Enterprises and Information (May 2004), now includes the government information division. This division was still not fully operational at the time of the survey (August 2004 to January 2005) and was in the process of recruiting staff.

It is also not unusual to find that a government department ceases producing media content when the responsible officer leaves as no other officer has been trained to replace them. Moreover, officer duty statements may not include details of their media duties and/or clearly articulate what role the media production plays in that department's goals. A change of government can also mean a change of press secretary, as this position is considered a political appointment. After the change of government in Vanuatu in late 2004 a new press secretary was appointed for the incoming prime minister.

One of the difficulties encountered in the survey, particularly in discussing government media capacity, is the use of terminology. In some countries, 'media unit', 'information officer' and 'media officer' can be used interchangeably to refer to an officer or officers who do some media work as part of their other duties. The amount of output may vary from a weekly radio program on public radio to a few press releases and/or newsletters annually. There are comparatively few officers in individual government departments who have the official title 'information officer' and/or 'media officer', with the exception of PNG government departments and agencies; Information Services (MICMR), Fiji; some Samoan government departments; and media units in departments of health, education and agriculture.

Press secretaries are mainly attached to the prime minister or president's office. While some of the press secretaries said they could liaise with senior ministers about their media needs, the focus of press secretaries and media units in the prime minister's or president's office is on the prime minister or president. There appear to be surprisingly few press secretaries at other senior levels of government, despite the fact that they could be of considerable assistance to the government's media output. As noted earlier, Government press secretaries or spokespeople do not necessarily have media training:

- In Tuvalu, the Secretary to Government is responsible for government–media relations, and he also chairs the Board of the Tuvalu Media Corporation. He has no media experience.
- The Public Relations Officer in Niue has experience as a teacher and the Prime Minister's Press Secretary is a lawyer (both positions are located within the Prime Minister's office).
- The Prime Minister's Press Secretary in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands are both experienced journalists whose appointments are described as political.
- In Palau the Presidential Chief of Staff handles all media enquiries relating to the President's office, while the press releases are written by a lawyer.
- In the Marshall Islands, the Public Relations Officer located in the President's office has a tertiary qualification in communications.
- In Samoa the Press Secretary and Deputy Press Secretary in the Press Secretariat located in the Prime Minister's office are both qualified journalists.

It is interesting to note that government media units do not require large numbers of staff to be effective. This is important for small to medium sized countries with limited resources. The Press Secretariat in Samoa (with two experienced journalists) is very productive. It produces timely, accessible information on government. GovMedia in the Cook Islands (with two experienced journalists) prior changes in late 2004, was also an effective unit.

5.2

1

Whole-of-government communications strategies

The MICMR in Fiji has published a very detailed communications strategy for the Ministry, which does include some references to other government ministries.²⁵ However, none of the governments surveyed have whole-of-government communications strategies. This means that government communications relies on the commitment, capacity and interest of individual departments and officers to communicate with the media. As a result, the amount and quality of media output across departments is highly variable. This comment from the Cook Islands illustrates the point:

You need to have the policy in place so your employees know why they are doing this. The policy is the guideline to why they are doing the media work. Why the ministry needs a media capacity.

Departmental budget lines for media production are also the exception rather than the rule and, if they exist, tend to be in the budgets for health, education and agriculture. These are the departments that are also most likely to receive donor funding. The researcher in Tuvalu commented:

There is no clear government policy in promoting politicians' public relations with the public through the media; this is evident in the lack of press releases from politicians in regard to their respective portfolios' activities; [and the] absence of budgetary allocation for the production of ministries' media content programs.

Some governments also put considerable emphasis on government advertising — content that is easily controlled — rather than other media content. For the purposes of the research, government advertising is not defined as governance content.

5.3

Media and journalism qualifications

While there appears to be a reasonable depth of experience and/or qualifications among staff in central government media or information units, with some staff having an arts, journalism or communications diploma or degree, this is generally not the case for staff working with the media in individual government departments, with the exception of PNG. These officers have had little or no media or journalism training and have had to learn on the job. There are, however, few if any media training options provided for them by their departments, with training largely depending on the availability of donor-funded short courses. Officers in the more media-active departments (health, agriculture and education) are most likely to have the opportunity to attend donor-funded training.

For the majority of officers, media production is only part of their work, and therefore they are not able to consistently develop their skills in this area. One of the results of this is that their media content may not be engaging or accessible, and could feature what is easiest to produce rather than more relevant content. For example, 'talking-head' radio, which features one or two people speaking and/or reading a script. This is quick and relatively easy to produce for time-poor officers with only a few media skills, but it is one of the least engaging media formats.

Some departmental officers made the point that they were seeking people for media positions who have a mix of qualifications: a qualification in a core area, such as health or education, and a journalism qualification, but progress on this appears to be very slow. In some departments the skills required to produce effective media content are not well appreciated, and a few departments were of the view that officers were capable of producing media content without training.

In the RMI none of the departments or agencies noted below has an officer regularly dealing with the media (radio and print) in terms of providing news and information for editorial purposes. Their responses to the question on training requirements are indicative of responses from government departments in other countries:

Health: We need to develop the skill level of staff. Health education can change attitudes of people, if we have qualified staff and the equipment to produce quality work. Need to develop public speaking skills [for health promotion presentations]. If they just mumble, the public doesn't get their message. It's not just what they say, but how they say it, their appearance and attitude. The staff has natural ability; it just needs to be developed. Other training needs include: a) video filming techniques and editing; b) equipment repair; c) how to fully use new equipment/systems; and d) interview techniques.

Education: a) Radio production; b) video editing; c) radio show script writing and organisation; d) interview techniques; e) training in running a printing operation to produce materials in Marshallese language.

Environment Protection Authority: There is a big need for capacity building. We need trained people to inform the public on issues so they understand and accept responsibility. We need staff who have journalism-type training. We need to improve the writing skill level and the ability to produce reports. We need training in scriptwriting and narration for producing plays and skits on radio.

Resources and Development: Training in photography and the use of digital cameras, and how to integrate these into reports and websites; training to produce a newsletter, how to develop and edit it. The difficulty is finding someone to run it. We've done it in the past, but it's been sporadic.

The following comment comes from the Solomon Islands Government Communications Unit, and provides a good summary of a range of issues raised by respondents on the training needs of government information officers:

They need to improve their English language writing skills, interview techniques, understand public affairs concepts, strategies [multimedia] and opportunities. Public information about government must be seen as credible, trustworthy, correct and timely. Good writing skills and use of different media to publicise government activities is vital. If the Government public information staff do not produce first class media material, government credibility suffers. If they do not attempt to reach a broad cross-section of the public, they will have limited impact and government draws negative comments instead.

There are currently, however, no accredited tertiary-level communications or media courses covering communications skills (oral and written presentation), public relations and media advocacy. The Divine Word University in Madang, PNG, is developing a program in this area, and a review of USP's Journalism course recommended that it broaden its focus to include this. This type of training would also be applicable to NGO media officers.

Government communication strategies should ideally contain an annual training strategy for ministers and government officers. This would include media awareness training for senior ministers and senior government officers, press release training for officers responsible for this area, and media production training (print, radio, television/video and online) for the officers directly involved with producing media content for publication or broadcast. The latter will be a relatively small number of officers.

5.4 Target audiences and monitoring output

Some government departments surveyed have quite specific audience targets. However, the majority of departments lack the resources and capacity to undertake systematic surveys to evaluate the impact and accessibility of their media content. Instead, like the media, they rely on informal feedback and monitoring for this. As a result, their media content, especially radio and television programs, is generally based on a number of assumptions about audience listening patterns and interests, without more substantive research.

Government media producers need more accurate information on potential audiences, but this will not happen until media organisations implement regular comprehensive audience survey research (for example, every two years). Given the lack of resources in both sectors in small to medium sized countries to do this, it may be feasible for the two sectors to work together to design and implement the survey. In the larger countries, where audience research is available, government needs to ensure that it is briefed by the media about these findings, and the implications the findings have for government media output.

5.5 Technical and financial resources

These resources vary significantly between departments in each country. With the exception of Tuvalu, Nauru and Niue, where the most any government department may have is a computer to generate press releases, only the active media-producing departments in each country tend to be reasonably resourced with production equipment, however, this equipment can be dated. A number of other departments made reference to having old equipment or equipment that needed to be repaired and, in a few instances, departments had donor-funded equipment that no one was trained to operate. Email access, as noted, along with the need to develop a working culture which

uses email for communication needs significant improvement. Telephone contact with outer island communities is not always available or reliable.

The cost of access to public service radio and television was mentioned as an issue in a number of countries. Some public radio stations do provide free access (notably in the North Pacific), but these are in the minority, and a number of newspapers will publish government articles at no cost if they have the space and/or if the article fits with the newspaper's editorial guidelines.

There is also growing frustration in some small to medium sized countries with the poor condition of the equipment and studios at the public service stations. Some of the government respondents said they would like to build up their own equipment and studio resources so that they did not have to rely on PSB stations. This would also mean that they did not have to pay the stations for production costs.

5.6 Improving government–media relations

The common theme in responses to this issue was the need for more media training for government officers working with the media, and that this training should include staff from media organisations to foster good working relationships between the two sectors. All senior government officers would benefit from workshops on media advocacy — how to use the media and the reasons for doing so — to gain a better understanding of government–media responsibilities. In addition to this, some government officers working with the media require specific media production skills, as outlined above.

There were also only a few examples of government ministers and parliamentarians receiving media training (Fiji, Tonga and the Solomon Islands), and this was identified as an area that would benefit from media workshops that improved politicians' understanding of the media and assisted them with their media work.

6. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

There are more than 1000 civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Pacific — the survey focused on NGOs that are registered and that work with the media on a regular basis (at least once every three months). The largest concentration of NGOs is in the South and West Pacific, with much smaller numbers in the North (FSM, Nauru, Palau and RMI). In Palau, for example, only nine NGOs were listed.

6.1 Media capacity

There are a small number of NGOs in each country that have a commitment to media advocacy, and staff with some experience producing media content. There is a much larger proportion of NGOs with little or no media capacity, and little appreciation of the value of media as part of advocacy work. This is the case even in larger countries such as Fiji and PNG. In Fiji, for example, it is estimated that there are 229 registered NGOs; of these only 17 NGOs are considered regular media producers and contributors. While 77 NGOs were interviewed for the survey, some declined. The reasons for this are instructive:

- NGOs generally have a small staff, consisting of a few paid officers and/or only volunteers. NGO staff had a number of demands on their time, and as a result, some found it difficult to attend interviews for the survey.
- Some NGOs did not see the relevance of a survey on media capacity to their NGO work.

NGOs often work in areas to do with good governance, and as such could make a valuable contribution to public debate on these issues. However, a number of the NGOs interviewed for the survey had difficulty articulating what their governance priorities were, and a few said their priorities were the same as the government priorities. With the exception of Fiji, and to a lesser extent the Solomon Islands, there does not appear to be a core group of NGOs in each country that works together to disseminate governance information.

A fundamental issue that arose in the research is that many NGOs and, it appears, donor agencies do not appreciate the value of NGO media advocacy, and in particular news and public affairs media and its role in development:

I think that a lot of NGOs, I know I speak for the Loto Taumafai Society of the Disabled when I say that we could use the media effectively if they were more aware of the power they have

as an NGO, as a watchdog, monitoring what Government and businesses and such are doing ... at the moment there seems to be a reluctance to do more upfront advocacy and lobbying with regards issues of importance to us. For our own part, we need to hold press conferences/seminars ... together with similar NGOs ... to ensure that the media is aware of what we're doing. (Samoa)

As a result, development projects may not have a media advocacy component or, if there is a communications component, this includes more traditional and expensive options such as advertisements, posters and pamphlets. There appears to be a lack of understanding of how media can complement these forms of communication and why, in a number of instances, it is better equipped to target audiences than these forms of communication.

Media production also does not need to be expensive. Some NGOs have the misconception that all media access has to be paid for, but this is not the case. A number of newspapers in the survey said that they would accept articles from NGOs and publish these for free if they had the space. Radio and television news and current affairs coverage is also another very effective avenue for NGOs and does not involve payment for airtime.

Some NGOs also have very good rural and outer island networks, and could work with the media to supplement the limited news and information coverage of these areas. This is an area that is greatly under-utilised.

The other key issue that arose in this sector is that NGO media work is heavily reliant on donor funding. It appears to be driven by the availability of donor funds for specific projects, and as such can reflect donor agendas. Once these funds cease, any media advocacy associated with the project usually ceases too. This can include funding for salaries of officers who produced the media content. Many of the NGOs interviewed do not appear to have the capacity (financial, human and technical) or the incentive to continue their media advocacy work without this funding. The following comment illustrates this:

We are currently reviewing our work with a view to taking on a media person next year, if all goes well. We have realized that working with the media is very important but are restricted currently by lack of enough financial support. Hopefully, all this should change next year. I am sure donors would support us if we have someone who can devise program ideas that we can promote through the media. We also need to contact the media often about our work; currently, we are not doing that. (Fiji)

There are, however, some very active major media-producing NGOs that have the capacity to provide leadership to other NGOs interested in media production in their respective countries. These NGOs are in Fiji (fem'LINKpacific); FSM (Micronesian Seminar); Kiribati (Nei Tabera Ni Kai Incorporated); PNG (Foundation for Rural Development, or FORD, Health-Education-Livelihood-Participation Resources and the Religious Television Association); RMI (Pacific Mission); and Vanuatu (Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group). These NGOs also have the capacity to be media trainers.

The regional association of NGOs, the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO), has recently employed a circulations and documentation officer, an experienced journalist who can provide assistance and advice to NGOs on media advocacy. There are also National Liaison Units (NLUs) in each country linked to PIANGO. Only a few of these are media active (Fiji, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu), and the remaining NLUs have yet to provide leadership in this area. This is essential if NGO media governance capacity is to develop.

6.2 NGO media officers and qualifications

It is not surprising, given the ad hoc and stop-start nature of much NGO media advocacy, that there are only a few full-time media officers working in the NGOs surveyed, and the majority of the NGO officers working with the media (either full or part time) do not have formal media or journalism qualifications and/or experience. Job descriptions for officers who undertake media advocacy as part of their other duties may also not refer to their media responsibilities. A number of NGOs have few staff and volunteer workers, making NGO media work even more challenging.

There are a few donor-funded media training opportunities for NGO officers, and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) has provided some training for the sector. Overall, however, the training available has been very limited and the majority of NGO officers that work with the media have to learn on the job.

Some of the NGOs interviewed in the survey have a good knowledge of how the media operates and how to tailor content for different media and audiences, and are aware of media deadlines. The majority, however, do not understand how the media operates or how to present material to the media and this impacts on the effectiveness of their media production. A few NGO officers, for example, commented on the fact that the media may not print or broadcast their press releases verbatim, and did not understand that the media's role is to use this material as the basis of a report, rather than to reproduce it as is. Some media respondents also said that they could not use the NGO articles or press releases because they were not written in a form that could be published. Another related issue, raised by an editor in the Cook Islands, is the relevance of some NGO content to local audiences:

Nine times out of ten what's sent is from their parent organisation. Or the organisation they are affiliated with sent the release to them saying 'send this to your local newspaper'. Stuff that is sent in is aimed at the international market. They [NGOs] probably don't see it as their job to rewrite it.

As noted, the media tend to contact a core group of active NGOs for news. As a consequence, these NGOs can get much more coverage than other NGOs.

Just an observation, the better-organised NGOs actually end up getting more time. The easier the access the media organisations have to these NGOs the more time they get. In all honesty I think the media is pretty lazy. So without much of an effort if they can get someone to talk about issues like for example, the Women's Crisis Centre, the Women's Rights Movement, they are always on hand to comment on issues affecting women, therefore 99 per cent of the time there will be the voice of the women. There are some other women's groups if I can use it as an example who feel that their voice should also be heard but they not organised. (Journalist, Fiji)

At the same time, a number of NGO and media respondents indicated that NGOs were not proactive in seeking media coverage and that, in some instances when NGOs did ask for media coverage, such as a newspaper column, their contributions were irregular and/or ceased. It would also appear that a number of NGOs only communicate with the media for specific events (opening and closing of workshops or conferences) and do not maintain regular contact apart from these events to build up their contacts with the media. NGO protocols can also be an obstacle to timely media coverage. The need for an NGO to refer press releases, letters to the editor and/or other content to its board for approval can delay the release of the information, making it no longer newsworthy.

A particularly challenging issue for NGOs is that some media do not define development issues as newsworthy. This reflects a deficiency in journalism training which needs to be addressed. In these instances NGOs also need to learn how to 'package' development material in a way that the media will use it:

Media in general seem to be reporting more on events in cities [Port Moresby, Lae] and not so much of what is happening in other parts of the country. There are many important programs implemented by NGOs in other parts of PNG which are not reported in newspapers. The NGOs are also well placed to do investigative journalism in their respective local areas. They are usually trusted by the people. Sometimes articles on local development work that we send in to newspapers do not get printed. Maybe not sensational or sexy enough? There could be pages allocated for civil society news and views and the media could make a better effort to have these views shared with the public. (PNG)

All NGOs should be aware of the importance of the media and the positive role the media can play in development. At the moment what we have in the media is just negative news. Development is just not "sexy" enough to be part of media drive so we have to make development attractive portfolio to make news. This is why we need qualified and skilled media people in NGOs. (Fiji)

NGO-media workshops would be very valuable to improve the understanding of each sector's requirements, and to assist the sectors to establish better contacts and networking opportunities. A model utilised in the Solomon Islands involving monthly meetings between NGOs and the media to discuss issues of national importance (since abandoned due to the civil disruption) may be feasible in other countries. A few NGOs reported holding NGO-media briefing sessions on particular issues, but this is not a widespread practice. Moreover, because many NGOs are time-poor and resource-

poor, mechanisms to encourage better NGO–media interaction require further exploration by PIANGO and the NLUs.

NGOs, like government department media producers, also need a better understanding of the new media environments they operate in so that they can target their media content more effectively (for example, using a range of appropriate media outlets). The accredited media and communications training, referred to earlier in 5.3, Media and Journalism Qualifications, in relation to government officers, is equally applicable to NGO media officers. This training would provide a more substantial base of media understanding and skills across the sector so that NGOs produce better targeted and better quality information via the media.

6.3 Cost of media

NGOs that would like to be involved with the media are finding the cost of publication or broadcast an obstacle. This was mentioned in each country but is seen as a particular issue in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, where access to public broadcasting is expensive. At the same time, as noted, some media do provide space and/or time at no cost, but NGOs do not always know how to make use of these opportunities. Due to concerns about the cost of the media, NGOs in some countries concentrate on producing newsletters usually with small print runs, rather than purchasing radio or television broadcast time.

6.4 NGO media resources

The active media-producing NGOs generally have access to media production equipment, including internet and email access. However, the majority of NGOs surveyed have little or no equipment, and some may not even have an office. Given the nature of NGO media production, and the number of NGOs, it is neither necessary nor practical for every NGO to have media production equipment to produce media content, perhaps beyond a computer and printer. Even the lack of this equipment can be overcome with proactive contact with journalists and editorial managers. NLUs working in conjunction with strong in-country media-producing NGOs could play an important role in this regard by providing an NGO media resource centre that NGOs could utilise. PIANGO could provide leadership in this area, working with the more media-active NLUs on some pilot projects, before applying this to other countries.

NGOs could play a more vital role in the dissemination of governance information, and this is illustrated well in the following comment from the Communications Rights in the Information Society (CRIS), a group of NGOs involved in communication and media around the world:

Our vision of the 'Information Society' is grounded in the Right to Communicate, as a means to enhance human rights and to strengthen the social, economic and cultural lives of people and communities. Crucial to this is that civil society organisations come together to help build an information society based on principles of transparency, diversity, participation and social and economic justice, and inspired by equitable gender, cultural and regional perspectives.²⁶

If this vision is to be realised in the Pacific, PIANGO, the NLUs and the key media producing NGOs in each country will need to work together to devise strategies to develop and implement this, in consultation with the media and funding agencies.

7. REGIONAL STRATEGIES

The SANA Reference Group met in March 2005 to consider the outcomes of the research. The Group identified key outputs, and strategies to achieve them, based on the research findings. These are presented below. The strategies are broad based and regional, and require further development at an in-country and/or sub-regional level to be effectively implemented. They will be used to inform the PMCF's year two and three activities. It is also intended that this report and the strategies can assist stakeholders, donor agencies and development partners to devise well-targeted strategies to assist in building capacity and sustainability across all three sectors. It is hoped that *Informing Citizens* and its strategies will assist with cooperation and harmonisation of work in this area across the region.

Government Legislative Reform

Desired Outcome	Strategies	Sub-strategies
<p>1. Public Service Broadcasting</p> <p>The ability to operate freely and effectively, far and wide, and provide a complete national voice</p>	<p>Government commitment to PSB through development of policy that articulates the roles and functions of PSB</p> <p>Legislation that protects and enforces the Public Service Broadcaster's ability to operate freely and effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore policy development mechanisms at regional level through Speakers Forum or similar fora • Consider SIBC Bill 2003 as a possible model • Explore the feasibility of separating public/government broadcast stations from a government department and/or political control • Review the impacts of corporatisation on funding and access, especially in small states • Ensure that PSB stations have the resources to transmit effectively across the country and to provide news and programs that reflect the diverse interests of people living in urban, rural and outer island communities • Encourage annual reviews of programming and target audiences and research to assess whether the content engages audiences
<p>2. Freedom of Information</p> <p>Maximise information made available to people from institutions of public importance, especially government, for transparency and accountability</p>	<p>Develop disclosure of information policies and practice</p> <p>Explore best practice for disclosure of information policies</p> <p>FOI awareness and education implemented for government and the public</p> <p>Training CSOs, relevant government departments, media, police on FOI</p> <p>Explore best practice for FOI legislation</p> <p>Review which international conventions have been signed by PICs which include FOI guarantees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes, manuals and training developed • Explore cooperation with the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) and other relevant agencies • Commonwealth initiative (cooperate with their program)

Desired Outcome	Strategies	Sub-strategies
<p>3. Local Content</p> <p>Increased amount of diverse quality local content in all media</p>	<p>Encourage investment in quality local productions</p> <p>Implement minimum local content requirements for all media and gradually increase as local production capacity develops</p> <p>Explore ways of defining and regulating local content requirements in each country</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore approaches including incentives and tax breaks • Explore the NZ On-Air model for private production • Explore linking minimum local content requirements to licensing arrangements
<p>4. Broadcast licensing</p> <p>A broadcast licence is a scarce national resource, and a privilege which includes responsibilities to contribute to the society in which the media operate.</p>	<p>Clear, fair, appropriate and transparent licensing systems, processes and fees for everyone - PSB, private and community</p> <p>Encourage the establishment of a regulatory body at arms length from government to monitor compliance with local content and community service requirements</p> <p>Review of spectrum licensing arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring/regulation systems developed to reflect this approach • Encourage licensing for specific categories of broadcasters - community and narrowcast, commercial, public, Pay TV
<p>5. Legislation</p> <p>Legislation that supports freedom of the media and freedom of speech</p>	<p>Review legislation for best practice that reasonably supports rights to privacy and protection against defamation without unduly restricting freedom of the media</p> <p>Review best practice defamation legislation in the Pacific Island countries to assist with revising legislation at national level</p> <p>Review best practice for other relevant legislation, including Official Secrets Act, Financial Management Act, Whistleblower legislation</p> <p>Review the relationship between the national constitutional provisions for freedom of speech, freedom of the press and FOI and the extent to which these are effectively reflected in national legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce model legislation (or relevant elements of best practice legislation) for consideration for implementation at national level • Produce model legislation (or relevant elements of best practice legislation) for consideration for implementation at national level • Produce model legislation (or relevant elements of best practice legislation) for consideration for implementation at national level

Government Media Capacity

Performance accountability

Performance Measure

1. Build capacity of government provision of information through institutional strengthening and human resource development (HRD)

Development of whole of government communications strategy
Development of HRD media strategy

- Including specific performance measures and targets
- Government to develop guidelines for interaction with the media for government media officers/spokespeople when dealing with the media and the public so that all government media spokespeople are more aware of what is expected from them
- Government Media Unit to annually evaluate the quality and effectiveness of government department media outputs, and strengthen where necessary

2. More accessible, media-literate parliamentarians and senior bureaucrats

Conduct media awareness and training programs as an established part of induction processes for parliamentarians and senior bureaucrats
Encourage recognition of the responsibility of government and statutory bodies to provide timely information

- To develop mentoring mechanisms for MPs to encourage media awareness with their colleagues
- Engage with Ombudsman's office, Public Service Commission, UNDP, ComSec, Speakers' Forum, Commonwealth Parliament Association, International Parliamentary Union and regional parliaments)
- Publish booklet with relevant policy, advice and media information such as deadlines, journalists, contacts and so on
- Government to arrange workshops with the media to share knowledge on how legislation is designed, and what the implications of current legislation are. Workshops to coincide with major policy/legislative initiatives

Include media budget lines for government departments

- Government to ensure that government media producers have access to equipment and resources necessary to produce effective media content. This could include a central pool of trained media producers and equipment

Develop accredited and accessible media and communications module for government bureaucrats/media officers

- Explore strategies for reliable delivery that do not depend on donor funding (eg with local training institutions)
- In smaller countries where operational National Media Associations exist, encourage the NMA to host and co-fund the training

Performance accountability**Performance Measure**

3. Improved accessibility and clarity of government and statutory body information

Implement cost effective use of ICTs - digital regional plan – to support e-government

- Encourage whole-of-government website development and maintenance to ensure that speeches, policies, legislation, budget details and so on are available and up-to-date
- Engage with the Forum Secretariat, CROP and other relevant regional bodies to develop policy and approach
- Establish a central Government Media Unit/Information Office which coordinates media outputs across all departments, including the Prime Minister's Office
- Government Media Unit to arrange regular briefings from the media for government media producers on audiences/readers and the most effective formats for reaching different audiences/readers

Ensure reliable and free (or easily affordable) supply of Hansard and key government and statutory body documents

Develop and publish disclosure policies for government departments and statutory bodies

Media Capacity

Desired Outcome

1. Accredited training at certificate level in media, communications and journalism

Strategies

Identify and include all accredited/registered VocEd training currently available in the region

Identify and assist capable organisations to deliver accredited training

Explore capacity of regional organisations to accredit training delivered in countries without a capable VocEd institution

Ensure that modules are locally relevant at the appropriate level and able to be broadly recognised in the region as a qualification

Explore a relationship with the USP Distance and Flexible Learning Centre to deliver VocEd level modules (certificate) to countries that do not have a capable VocEd institution

Support initiatives to encourage universities to deliver accredited education across the pacific region

Standardise certificate level courses to ensure Pacific wide recognition and cross accreditation

Explore and support PINA to become a regional Registered Training Organisation to deliver journalism training at regional level, as well as to advise on industry relevance

It is aimed to ensure that courses are developed and delivered on a user-pay basis

Ensure individual modules are capable of being delivered as stand-alone short courses but recognised as a step towards a certificate

Explore South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment's capability to deliver media training at secondary level

Ensure existing regional training resources are identified, coordinated and used in support of the delivery of new accredited training, especially from the SPC

Sub-strategies

• Special attention will be given to the particular problems for small countries

• Recognising the importance of management training in supporting media and professional development

• Strengthen PINA so it can take a leadership role in journalism and media training and accreditation

• PINA and key training institutions in the region (vocational education and universities) to explore more sustainable approaches to journalism training to reduce the reliance on ad hoc funded donor training activities

• Share educational materials with CSOs so they can share material with their constituents

Desired Outcome

2. Acknowledge the role and strengths of the tertiary institutions in the region and journalism programmes need to reflect the needs of the industry

Strategies

Explore opportunities to enhance the working relationships between the tertiary institutions and the media industry at regional level

Encourage mechanisms to integrate industry support for media and communications courses through industry-supported work placements/attachments and mentoring

Encourage the development of flexible delivery of courses

The media industry also needs to encourage their own staff and recruits to become graduates of an accredited media course, or a university-level specialist course

Explore other models in the region to inform approach to accredited education

Ensure prior learning and experience is recognised by relevant institutions (RPL)

Encourage education and training institutions to ensure students take a wide range of specialist subjects

Encourage the development of an in-house training culture especially through retired senior journalists

Identify available pool of trainers from within the media industry

Provide training of trainers to equip them to play the role

Develop materials, guidelines for in-house training and mentoring

Encourage National Associations in smaller countries to identify and coordinate availability of industry trainers and mentors

Encourage tertiary institutions to keep records of their alumni and their careers

Sub-strategies

Media Capacity (cont)

Desired Outcome

Strategies

Sub-strategies

3. Better coverage of rural areas to reflect the geography, demographics and issues of the Pacific Island Nations

Recognise newsworthiness of non-urban stories and marginalised groups

Media to better engage with CSOs and government to provide coverage from remote areas

Develop mechanisms and strategies to build trust and mutual working relationships between media, CSOs and government

Media industry, government and NGO media to devise cost-effective mechanisms to systematically collect audiences feedback on a regular basis to ascertain whether current media content is engaging audiences, and audience interests.

4. Journalism will strive to be better researched, fair, balanced and use investigative skills as part of its contribution to national development

Improved access to education and training in investigative journalism

Strengthen newsroom management and leadership to improve standards and breadth and depth of news

• Encourage media organisations to develop policies on staff/journalism career paths and professional development

Develop mechanisms for media to coordinate regular briefings with NGOs and government departments on specific governance issues, for example economic development, health, new legislation so media is fully briefed on these issues

Develop a model of journalism principles as a basis for developing own code of ethics

Code(s) of Ethics promulgated and enforced in media organisations, associations and individual professionals

Desired Outcome

5. Media organisations with a code of ethics, complaints mechanism and sanctions mechanisms

Strategies

PINA to encourage the development of a Code of Ethics to be developed by National Associations as part of their capacity building

National Associations to develop Codes of Ethics, in association with their membership for industry-wide adoption

Complaints and sanctions mechanisms to be developed and implemented at national level

Establish awards for recognition of outstanding practice in journalism and media

Explore mechanisms for and commitment to publicising the Code(s) of Ethics to civil society and government to encourage understanding of ethical media - its roles and responsibilities

Educate the public about the code of ethics to improve their understanding of the media and how they can lodge complaints based on breaches to the code

Sub-strategies

- PINA to work with National Associations to establish whether a broad regional code to form the basis of national codes is desirable

- Where Codes of Ethics exist, explore barriers to recognition and observance of the Code(s)

- Where complaints and sanctions mechanisms exist, explore barriers to timely and effective processing of complaints

- Encourage regional agencies to recognise effective and responsible media as having an important role in good governance and development

6. Strong national media associations representative of all media in country (especially in small to medium countries)

Assist with capacity building of PINA, so that it can provide a leadership role in strengthening national associations and providing an authoritative voice for them at regional level

Draw on existing regional expertise to support development of national media associations

- Constitution, code of conduct, complaints mechanisms and training, management and sustainability

- PINA to work with national media associations to strengthen their capacity and sustainability

- PINA to inform its members when media outlets successfully attract sponsorships to run independent campaigns of national importance (e.g. PNG anti-corruption campaign)

Encourage the development of active journalism associations in larger countries

Civil Society Media Capacity

Desired Outcome	Strategies	Sub-strategies
<p>1. CSOs are more media savvy and are able to contribute to the news agenda</p>	<p>Encourage strong relationships between the CSO sector (NLU) and media associations</p> <p>Identify sector leaders and CSO resource persons to provide leadership and capacity building in media awareness and advocacy</p> <p>Identify experienced media practitioners within the sector to provide assistance, training and mentoring to less media capable CSOs</p> <p>Take an 'every opportunity' approach to access expertise (including visitors, retirees etc.)</p> <p>Strengthen the NLU and leading NGOs media capacity, including training, so that they can provide a national resource base</p> <p>Ensure initiatives plan for sustainability of gains beyond donor funding period</p> <p>Training for sector leaders and resource person in media awareness and operations</p> <p>Use existing communication networks to disseminate media awareness and skills</p> <p>Ensure that media advocacy is addressed as part of the accredited modules</p> <p>Develop a resource manual/CD for NGOs on media awareness and contacts.</p> <p>Ensure that local advocacy trainers are given the tools to continue training and mentoring</p> <p>Support for a media/training officer at PIANGO to act as a resource for NGOs in the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recognised that CSOs offer a very extensive network from the centre to the grassroots, and media should value this Encourage understanding the benefits of CSOs acting collectively to inform the media
<p>2. The people are more media savvy and are able to expect quality media on issues of importance to them.</p>	<p>Encourage public awareness campaigns on the role of the media</p> <p>Encourage CSO's and Media Associations to engage with the public on the role of the media</p> <p>Investigate the Media Council of PNG approach to engagement with civil society as a possible model for other Pacific countries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage understanding of the benefits of the media seeing the public as its 'constituency' as well as its market.

Regional Media and Communications Capacity

Desired Outcome

1. Peak bodies (ForSec, PINA, PIANGO and others) cooperate to work on common issues

Strategies

PINA website re-established as a matter of urgency
 PIANGO website reviewed for its 'media friendly' and information for media

Position of the media in the Pacific Plan is communicated through PINA to the Forum feedback mechanisms and Ministries of Foreign Affairs in member countries

The importance of media in development and civil society in the Pacific Plan is communicated through PIANGO to the Forum feedback mechanisms and Ministries of Foreign Affairs in member countries

Encourage mainstreaming media development in national and regional development policies and budgets

PINA, CROP other relevant agencies to discuss ways and means to ensure sustainable, coverage of regional events and organisations

Recognise the particular challenges faced by the small Pacific Island countries in developing and sustaining diverse, quality media that meets the needs of national development and the key demographic groups in the country

Recognise and strengthen PACNEWS as an important regional news resource for coverage of regional news events

PMCF to facilitate a donor/development agency meeting to discuss the recommendations of the SANA and issues raised in relation to media, government and NGO media capacity building
 Aim towards a 5-year approach (short and medium term) to capacity-building assistance for the media and communications sector

Ensure approaches to sustainability and institutionalisation are included in the early stage of implementation of all projects

Sub-strategies

- This group resolves that PINA is the appropriate coordinating body for consultations, advisory role and lobbying on media and communications. It is responsible for ensuring wide consultations across the sector

2. Harmonise and coordinate donor efforts to add value to the development of media and communications in the Pacific region

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- ¹ Government radio stations are part of a government department.
- ² Small countries are being defined as those with populations under 100,000 people — the Cook Islands, FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, RMI and Tuvalu. Medium-sized countries — Tonga, Vanuatu, Samoa and the Solomon Islands — have populations ranging from 100,000 to just over 500,000. The two large countries — Fiji and PNG — have populations of just over 800,000 and five million respectively.
- ³ Abigail Rath, 'Freedom of Information and Open Government', Background Paper 3/2000, Parliament of New South Wales. <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parliament/publications.nsf/0/B5E59EF1F98B3D58CA256ECF00B00C3>.
- ⁴ Peter John Aitsi, President, Media Council of PNG, 'Government and Media Regulations: The Papua New Guinea Experience', a paper presented to the Development Research Symposium, Suva, Fiji, October 2003, p. 5.
- ⁵ See Open Sesame: Looking for the Right to Information in the Commonwealth, CHRI, India, 2003, for a discussion of FOI principles and models and an overview of FOI in Pacific Island countries that are members of the Commonwealth.
- ⁶ The prime minister is also the minister responsible for PSB in PNG, Tonga, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.
- ⁷ National Integrity Systems, Transparency International Country Study Report, Niue, 2004, p. 9.
- ⁸ Ieremia Tabai, member of government, Kiribati.
- ⁹ PNG has a national service and a provincial network of 19 stations and the Solomon Islands has a national service and two regional stations, neither of which were operational during the survey period due to a lack of resources. Lack of resources have also been a major obstacle to the effective operation of PNG's provincial network.
- ¹⁰ The Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited (FBCL), V6AH, Pohnpei and V6AJ, Kosrae were the only PSB stations in the survey that undertook regular audience research.
- ¹¹ This decision was overturned by the Suva High Court in March 2005, and will now be reviewed (<http://www.radiofiji.org/news/current/archive/Mar2004/26032004.htm>).
- ¹² Jason Brown, 'Broadcasting Corporation Deputy Chair Calls for "due process" on Media Bills', Pacific Media Watch Online, 19 April 2005.
- ¹³ A Submission to the Hon. Simone Kaitani, Minister for Information, on the Draft Media Bill from the Board of Directors of the Fiji Times Limited, 30 May 2003.
- ¹⁴ Taione & Others v Kingdom of Tonga, Summary of Decision, Supreme Court of Tonga, 2004.
- ¹⁵ See David Robie, 'The sword of Damocles in the Pacific: Two media regulatory case studies', paper to the Public Right to Know Conference, 17–19 October 2003, Sydney; International Freedom of eXchange, country reports, <http://www.ifex.org/>; and International Press Institute World Press Freedom Review, country reports, <http://www.freemedia.at/>.
- ¹⁶ The Media in Governance: A Guide to Assistance, DFID, UK, 2002, p. 3.
- ¹⁷ For details on the development of television and radio in the Pacific see Helen Molnar and Michael Meadows, *Songlines to Satellites*, Pluto Press, Australia, 2001; and for details on Pacific Island television content and capacity see James Bentley, *Pacific Islands Television Survey Report 2002*, UNESCO, Fiji.
- ¹⁸ Mainstream media refers to major media outlets such as PSB stations, commercial radio and television, and daily, weekly, fortnightly (in some countries described as bi-weekly) and, in the case of Tuvalu only, monthly newspapers.
- ¹⁹ In 2000 more than 40 per cent of the population of several Pacific Island countries were under 15 years of age: 49 per cent in the Marshall Islands, 44 per cent in the FSM and Vanuatu, 43 per cent in Nauru, Tonga and the Solomon Islands (see http://www.fpaid.org.nz/SITE_Default/SITE_fpaid/SITE_the_issues/pacific.asp).
- ²⁰ See David Robie 'Pacific newsroom profiles: Media literacy and education in Fiji, Papua New Guinea', paper presented at Journalism Education Association Conference, Suva, Fiji, 5–9 December 2004, for further details on UPNG and USP, Fiji, university journalism courses.
- ²¹ Students are able to leave school at Form 5 with a certificate, or go on to complete Form 6, and receive a certificate of completion for this level. In Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu students are eligible to sit for the examination for the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate (PSSC) in Form 6, or Grade 12. In Samoa students sit for the PSSC in Form 7, or Year 13. In some Pacific countries students are able to study Form 7 at school, the equivalent to a foundation year at the University of the South Pacific. PSSC holders usually go on to do the foundation year at USP, the Preparatory Year at the National University of Samoa or New Zealand Bursary. Many students also leave the school system at this stage to find employment.
- ²² Ian Beales, *Draft Code of Practice for Samoa*, Thomson Foundation, January 2005, p. 4.
- ²³ Country name withheld at request of respondent.
- ²⁴ Jason Brown, 'Govmedia disappears', Pacific Media Watch Online, 12 March 2005.
- ²⁵ MICMR Corporate Plan 2004 does not include details on the expected media outputs of each Government Ministry, but it does clearly outline all the Ministry's expected outputs. As such it provides a very good working model on which to build a whole-of-government communications strategy and is the only example of its type cited during the survey.
- ²⁶ See <http://www.crisinfo.org/content/view/full/226/>.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

Freedom of expression is a broad concept that is regarded as fundamental to the operation of democracy. It operates on a number of levels: that of the individual, the media and the operations of government. It begins with the right of an individual to freedom of speech. Given the importance of the media as a contributor to public debate, in order for freedom of expression to be meaningfully exercised a diverse and independent media is required. Both the individual and the media are in turn dependent on open access to government information in order that these freedoms can be exercised in relation to the functioning of democratic systems of government.

There will always be disparities between the requirements of the law and the practical functioning of the media, individual freedom and government transparency. However, a rigorous legal framework for the protection of freedom of expression will help to ensure that unwarranted restrictions on speech can be challenged by taking legal action to protect the rights of individuals and the media.

A country's constitution is the starting point for any examination of the status that is given to these protections. For not only may the constitution provide a legal remedy in the event of a restriction on speech, the constitution is an expression of the basic principles by which that society is to operate. These two aspects of the constitutional protection for expression are important to appreciate. First, a constitution restricts the powers of the government in relation to limiting freedom of expression. If a government passes a law that restricts speech, that law may be open to challenge in a court on the basis that it breaches the country's constitutional protection for freedom of expression. Second, the constitution is also the instrument which empowers the government to legislate in order to achieve freedom of expression — it sets out the scope of legislative power. Thus a constitutional provision is to be regarded as a power to enact legislation in order that rights can be fully enjoyed.

International conventions are being relied upon increasingly as authority for the measures that countries should take in order to fulfil their constitutional obligations in relation to human rights like freedom of expression. The relevance in the Pacific region of international human rights instruments can be seen in the explicit references to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights) in the Constitution of Papua New Guinea and the detailed examination of obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights undertaken by the Tongan Supreme Court in a 2004 decision that is discussed in Part I. The Constitution of Fiji also makes specific reference to developments in human rights in its provisions regarding interpretation. In practice, then, the range of rights enjoyed by the citizens of a country can be found in a range of legal sources: the constitution, case law that has developed around the interpretation of constitutional provisions and international human rights instruments. Those rights, in turn, are implemented through legislative provisions in each country.

Strong protection for freedom of expression requires a range of legislative provisions to be enacted that recognises the obligations on the media and on government to ensure the effective enjoyment of freedom of expression. It also requires ongoing scrutiny of all legislation to ensure that it does not produce an unacceptable restriction on freedom of expression. The link between freedom of expression and democratic government is reinforced by the important principle of international human rights law that restrictions on freedom of expression should be only as great as is

'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society'. Courts treat those limits that are necessary to meet an important democratic goal as being justifiable limits on speech. The role of the media as an important means of expression and agent for open government is highlighted by a reference in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provision for freedom of expression which sets out the right 'to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media'. While international human rights law recognises freedom of the media as an essential corollary to an individual's freedom of expression, an explicit reference to media freedom in some countries' constitutions provides an even stronger basis for protecting freedom of the media.

The fact that all but one of the 14 Pacific Island countries considered in this report have a constitutional protection for freedom of expression provides a sound basis for the development of legislation in the countries that would ensure the fullest enjoyment of this freedom, and for this to be evident through the existence of vigorous public debate and a diverse and independent media in each of the Pacific Island countries.

This report provides an overview of the legal treatment of freedom of expression, media freedom and access to government information in the 14 Pacific Island countries of the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The examination of the legal framework for freedom of expression consists of two parts: Part I addresses the constitutional protection for expression. It considers the range of sources for the protection of speech, media and information freedoms, and focuses on the constitutional basis for freedom of expression, freedom of the media and freedom of information within the 14 countries. After examining each of the countries, brief points are made about how Pacific Island case law has approached the constitutional protections. Part II moves from the constitutional bases to the legislation that should enact legal protection for freedom of speech, media and information. It examines relevant legislation from nine Pacific Island countries: the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, PNG, RMI, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Drawing on international conventions and legal precedents in the area of human rights law, a set of 10 related principles for the strong protection of freedom of expression are developed. The principles reflect a consensus of views across international human rights sources about the elements required for the full enjoyment of the rights of freedom of speech, expression and access to information. Key legislative provisions and proposals that can be expected to have an impact on the operations of the media from the nine countries are identified and examples are provided of provisions that overtly restrict media freedom and of provisions that enhance it. (Appendix E lists the Acts and Bills that were available and consulted in the course of this research.)

The chapter concludes with the Part III which contains three case studies dealing with constitutional protections for freedom of expression.

PART I

CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION OF THE MEDIA AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The scope of explicit constitutional protection for the media and free speech varies considerably between the 14 countries. The summary table on page 43 provides an overview of the constitutional provisions, although it is important to note that speech rights are not only to be found in the specific wording of constitutional provisions. The legal existence of, and restrictions on, freedom of expression will also be based on internationally established principles of human rights law.

Niue is the only country that makes no reference at all to the principle of freedom of expression in its Constitution. Some constitutions, such as those of PNG and Fiji, make extensive and detailed provision for freedom of the press and the freedom of people to communicate and receive communications. In contrast the Constitution of the FSM contains, within its declaration of rights, the brief statement that: 'No law may deny or impair freedom of expression, peaceable assembly, association, or petition.'¹

The specific constitutional protections of freedom of expression within each Pacific Island country are examined in turn, below the summary table, and the extent of the rights in each country is

assessed. For ease of reference, constitutional provisions from each country are also reproduced. The analysis has considered the following features:

- Whether the constitution contains a protection of freedom of expression;
- Whether this, or a separate provision, refers to media or press freedoms;
- The nature of any express qualifications on these freedoms;
- Whether the freedoms take the form of entrenched provisions (that is, a constitutional provision which is more difficult to amend than other provisions); and
- Whether the constitution makes any express or implied reference to freedom of information.

In relation to the constitutional provisions, Part I suggests it can be said that:

- Express constitutional provision is almost always made for freedom of speech (in all the countries except Niue).
- Express constitutional provision is also often made for media freedom (in FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, PNG, RMI, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu). In the other countries, provisions protecting speech are likely to be interpreted as including media freedoms, as freedom of expression is increasingly being understood as encompassing a diverse and independent media.
- The status of these constitutional provisions is enhanced in some countries (in Kiribati, Nauru, RMI, the Solomon Islands and Tonga) that impose additional requirements on any amendment of the provisions, beyond the requirements for other constitutional amendments. For example, in Kiribati a referendum is required to amend the constitutional protection of freedom of expression, whereas a two-thirds majority of the legislature can pass other constitutional amendments.
- With regard to express limitations on the constitutional protections for speech, no limitations exist in two countries (FSM and Palau) but restrictions are likely to be implied in accordance with international practice. Four countries adopt human rights language as to the allowable limits on speech (Fiji, Kiribati, PNG and the Solomon Islands), namely, that any limits must be 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society' and a similar approach is likely to be taken by courts in the interpretation of the other constitutions.
- Express provision is rarely made for freedom of information (only in Fiji and PNG), but there are a number of provisions that strongly suggest this right exists (FSM, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands and Tuvalu). In any event, it has been argued in international human rights literature that a right to freedom of information automatically arises from a constitutional protection for speech. That is, the protection of freedom of expression in democratic constitutions encompasses freedoms of speech, media and information.

Here, each of these issues is explained briefly.

While all Pacific Island constitutions, other than that of Niue, make reference to freedom of expression and/or speech, only some of the constitutions specifically refer to the media in the relevant provision (the FSM state of Pohnpei, Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, PNG, RMI, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu). However, Pacific Island courts are most likely to interpret constitutional protection for expression as including protection for media freedom. As the analysis of case law later in this section indicates, courts have demonstrated an inclination to interpret freedom of expression in light of its formulation in international human rights statements, which include media freedom, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In this regard it is noteworthy that the PNG Constitution makes explicit reference to these statements and requires that they, together with decisions of the international and European human rights courts, be taken into consideration when assessing what 'is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society'.

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights protects freedom of expression and refers specifically to the media:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the means whereby states commit to a legal obligation to protect specific human rights set out in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, emphasises the importance of the dissemination of information:

Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of [the person's] choice.

While it appears that no Pacific Island country is yet a signatory to the *International Covenant*, it is clearly important in the Pacific. For example, note the reliance that the Tongan courts and the constitutions of Fiji and PNG place on the principles of international human rights and the specific provisions of international human rights instruments like the International Convention.

The European Convention on Human Rights similarly provides a right to freedom of expression.

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.

It is noteworthy that the reference in this convention to a state being able to licence the media will be read narrowly and, as is discussed later in this document, it relates to the administrative and technical operations of the media rather than media content.

The status accorded to freedom of expression also varies across the constitutions. Some countries clearly privilege the right, such as Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, with a chapter in the Constitution entitled 'Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms of the Individual'. The status of these freedoms is meaningfully enhanced by attaching onerous requirements to any attempt to amend the specific protections — in the case of Kiribati a referendum is required and in the Solomon Islands a higher than usual majority of the Parliament is required. Tonga, Nauru and the Marshall Islands also impose additional requirements to ensure that any amendment to the freedom of expression provision is validly made. By way of contrast, in Vanuatu an amendment to the freedom of expression provision — as with all other sections (except those that deal with the status of the Bislama, English and French languages, the electoral system and the parliamentary system) — effectively requires only a 50 per cent majority of Parliament by requiring a two-thirds majority at which three-quarters of members are present.

Nonetheless, most of the constitutions include limitations on the fundamental rights. The Constitutions of Palau and FSM appear to contain no restrictions on the right to freedom of expression. Restrictions may be inferred, although they may not extend beyond those generally agreed restrictions for which there is support in international law. Four constitutions adopt a form of words in relation to limitations on free speech, which is common in international instruments. For example, the Solomon Islands Constitution adopts the language of human rights law with its use of the expression 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society' when it sets out the acceptable limitations on the constitutional protection of freedom of expression. The Constitutions of Kiribati and Fiji adopt a similar form of words, as does PNG. In addition, as previously noted, the PNG Constitution incorporates a number of human rights instruments as a means of expanding on the interpretation of 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society' as a limitation on restrictions on the freedoms of the individual.

Only the PNG Constitution (section 51) and that of Fiji (section 174) make specific reference to a right of access to government documents. The PNG provision is extensive, although it is not clear that any legislation has yet been enacted to facilitate the right created by this section. In addition to these express references there are a number of provisions in the constitutions of other countries that strongly support the existence of such a right of access to government information. For example, the Kiribati Constitution refers to the right to receive ideas and information as do the Constitutions of FSM, Tuvalu and the Solomon Islands. Furthermore the Federal Constitution of the Solomon Islands Bill 2004, which would substantially reform the Solomon Islands Constitution, would introduce a right of access to information. These provisions are detailed below in the country-by-country analysis.

While freedom of information legislation is often based on a request for specific documents, the principle of open government would suggest a more proactive approach — one in which information is routinely available about government activities and programs. This concept is developed further in Part II, as is the argument that a right to freedom of information is implied by freedom of expression.

Speech, media and information freedoms in Pacific Island constitutions

	Freedom of speech	Free media/press	Access to information
Cook Islands	Freedom of speech and expression – s64	<i>No provision</i>	<i>No provision</i>
Federated States of Micronesia	Freedom of expression – FSM Art IV s1	Right to speak, write and publish freely – Pohnpei Art 4 s1	Right to receive information – Pohnpei Art 4 s1
Fiji	Freedom of speech and expression – s30(1)	Freedom of the press and other media – s30(1)(b)	Freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas – s30(1)(a) – and public rights of access to official documents of government and agencies – s 174
Kiribati	Freedom of expression – s12(1)	Freedom to communicate ideas and information – s12(1)	Freedom to receive ideas and information – s12(1)
Nauru	Freedom of expression – ss3 and 12	<i>No provision</i>	<i>No provision</i>
Niue	<i>No provision</i>	<i>No provision</i>	<i>No provision</i>
Palau	Freedom of expression – Art IV s2	Freedom of press and protection of sources – Art IV s2	No provision
Papua New Guinea	Freedom of expression and publication – s46(1)	Freedom of the press and other mass communications media – s46(2)(b)	Freedom to receive ideas and information – s46(2)(a) – and right to freedom of information – s51
Republic of the Marshall Islands	Freedom of speech – Art II s1(1)	Freedom of the press – s1(1)	<i>No provision</i>
Samoa	Freedom of speech and expression – s13 (1)(a)	<i>No provision</i>	<i>No provision</i>
Solomon Islands	Freedom of expression – s12 (1)	Freedom to communicate ideas and information – s12 (1)	Freedom to receive ideas and information – s12 (1) and note clause in Bill.
Tonga	Freedom of speech – s7(1)	Freedom of the press – s7(1)	<i>No provision</i>
Tuvalu	Freedom of expression – s24(1) and (2)	Freedom to communicate ideas and information – s24(2)	Freedom to receive ideas and information – s24(2)
Vanuatu	Freedom of expression – s5(1)(g)	<i>No provision</i>	<i>No provision</i>

Country-by-country analysis

Cook Islands

Section 64 of the Constitution of the Cook Islands sets out a wide range of what are referred to as fundamental human rights and freedoms. It includes a specific reference in subsection 1(e) to 'freedom of speech and expression'. Subsection 2 contains a number of qualifications on the freedoms that in general reflect common restrictions on freedom of expression. Some qualifications, such as 'the general welfare', should be read down to accord with international principles about limitations on speech, if legislation was passed that unreasonably limited freedom of expression.

There is no reference to freedom of information, nor any implied reference, although one might argue that the provision in subsection 1(d) providing for 'freedom of thought, conscience and religion' would require access to information in order to fulfil this freedom together with the argument that the freedom of speech and expression implies the need for access to information.

Section 41 enables the legislature to amend the constitution by a two-thirds majority, with additional requirements for a referendum in respect of those sections that prescribe relations with the monarchy (UK). This does not include the fundamental human rights and freedoms.

COOK ISLANDS

64. (1) *It is hereby recognised and declared that in the Cook Islands there exist, and shall continue to exist, without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion, opinion, belief, or sex, the following fundamental human rights and freedoms –*

- (a) *The right of the individual to life, liberty, and security of the person, and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with law;*
- (b) *The right of the individual to equality before the law and to the protection of the law;*
- (c) *The right of the individual to own property and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with law:*

Provided that nothing in this paragraph or in Article 40 of this Constitution shall be construed as limiting the power of Parliament to prohibit or restrict by Act the alienation of Native land (as defined in section 2(1) of the Cook Islands Act 1915 of the Parliament of New Zealand);

- (d) *Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion;*
 - (e) *Freedom of speech and expression;*
 - (f) *Freedom of peaceful assembly and association.*
- (2) *It is hereby recognised and declared that every person has duties to others, and accordingly is subject in the exercise of his rights and freedoms to such limitations as are imposed, by any enactment or rule of law for the time being in force, for protecting the rights and freedoms of others or in the interests of public safety, order, or morals, the general welfare, or the security of the Cook Islands.*
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Federated States of Micronesia

An extremely brief provision deals with freedom of expression and there is no express qualification on this in the FSM Constitution. No express or implied reference is made to freedom of information. While in general the FSM Supreme Court has taken an independent path in the interpretation of the Constitution, when interpreting the FSM Declaration of Rights, reliance has been placed on US authorities.² This suggests the very strong protection of free speech under the United States (US) Constitution's First Amendment could be drawn upon in the FSM.

The states of FSM each have their own constitution. The Pohnpei Constitution contains provision for freedom of speech, which extends to the right to receive information. This ensures that the government has the necessary power to enact freedom of information legislation, although, as noted, a right to freedom of expression would also provide an adequate basis for the enactment of freedom of information legislation. Article VIII of the FSM Constitution outlines the division of powers as between the Federation and the states. The Federation's powers are those specified in the Constitution, together with any power that is 'of such an indisputably national character'. In

the case of the freedoms, while the Pohnpei Constitution makes explicit reference to the right to receive information, this would not be regarded as inconsistent with, or in excess of, the rights contained in the FSM Constitution.

The FSM Constitution may be amended by a popular initiative, a constitutional convention, or by Congress. A three-quarter majority is required in each of three out of four states. There is no extra requirement in relation to amending the constitutional provisions dealing with the freedoms being discussed. The Pohnpei Constitution can be amended by a three-quarter approval by the legislature followed by a two-thirds referendum result.

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

ARTICLE IV – Declaration of Rights

Section 1. No law may deny or impair freedom of expression, peaceable assembly, association, or petition.

POHNPEI

Article 4 – Fundamental Rights

Section 1. No government action may deny or impair the right of every person to speak, write, and publish freely on any subject and the right to receive information on all subjects. A person may be held responsible for untruthful statements injuring other persons without privilege, and for statements creating a clear and immediate danger of unlawful conduct or substantial injury to the public.

Fiji

Section 30 of the Fiji Constitution contains a comprehensive reference to freedom of speech and expression. It is expressed as including freedom of the press and media, together with the freedom to seek and receive information. This statement of rights provides a strong basis on which to expect freedom of information legislation and certainly provides the powers necessary for its enactment.

The qualifications contained in subsection 2 include specific reference to restrictions that might be placed on the media. Some of these are potentially wide in their scope, such as ‘preventing attacks on the dignity of individuals, groups or communities or respected offices or institutions in a manner likely to promote ill will between races or communities’. Should legislation be passed that is intended to implement this restriction on freedom of expression that has the effect of providing for prior restraint on publication,³ it may be seen as an excessive limitation on freedom of expression. A feature of this section is the right of an individual to require a correction of inaccurate or offensive media reports. Other countries have similar legislative requirements but these are not contained in their constitutions.

FIJI

30. (1) *Every person has the right to freedom of speech and expression, including:*

- (a) freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas; and*
- (b) freedom of the press and other media.*

(2) *A law may limit, or may authorise the limitation of, the right to freedom of expression in the interests of:*

(a) national security, public safety, public order, public morality, public health or the orderly conduct of national or municipal elections;

(b) the protection or maintenance of the reputation, privacy, dignity, rights or freedoms of other persons, including:

(i) the right to be free from hate speech, whether directed against individuals or groups; and

(ii) the right of persons injured by inaccurate or offensive media reports to have a correction published on reasonable conditions established by law;

- (c) *preventing the disclosure, as appropriate, of information received in confidence;*
 - (d) *preventing attacks on the dignity of individuals, groups or communities or respected offices or institutions in a manner likely to promote ill will between races or communities or the oppression of, or discrimination against, any person or persons;*
 - (e) *maintaining the authority and independence of the courts;*
 - (f) *imposing reasonable restrictions on the holders of public offices in order to secure their impartial and confidential service; or*
 - (g) *regulating the technical administration of telecommunications;*
- but only to the extent that the limitation is reasonable and justifiable in a free and democratic society.*
- (3) *In this section:*
hate speech means an expression in whatever form that encourages, or has the effect of encouraging, discrimination on a ground proscribed by section 38.

Section 3 of the Constitution requires, in relation to interpretation, that regard be had to 'social and cultural developments and especially ... to developments in the area of human rights'. This strongly suggests that the interpretation of the Constitution would draw on international human rights instruments.

FIJI (cont)

3. *In the interpretation of a provision of this Constitution:*
- (b) *regard must be had to the context in which this Constitution was drafted and to the intention that constitutional interpretation take into account social and cultural developments, especially:*
 - (i) *developments in the understanding of the content of particular human rights; and*
 - (ii) *developments in the promotion of particular human rights.*

Section 191 sets out the procedure for constitutional amendment by a two-thirds majority of the members of each House, with additional requirements in respect of the provisions that prescribe the composition of the House in respect of Fijians, Indians and Rotumans.

Kiribati

The Constitution makes express provision for freedom of expression in section 12. It is a broad provision because it includes the freedoms to receive ideas and information and to communicate ideas and information. As previously discussed, however, such a constitutional provision would only enable a legal challenge to overt restrictions on media freedom. More detailed laws would need to be enacted to ensure media diversity and independence, and to enable the media to fulfil its important role in democratic governance.

The Constitution makes explicit reference to the ability of the government, notwithstanding the protection of freedom of expression, to regulate in certain areas, including wireless and broadcasting. The term 'regulate' conveys a right to determine the technical and administrative means by which the media operates, for example to establish a licensing system, but it does not extend to laws that would enable a prohibition on a specific operator or outlaw certain media content. (It is noteworthy that the Solomon Islands Constitution makes this distinction explicit when it refers to 'regulating the administrative or the technical operation' of various media forms.)

Section 69 provides for the amendment of the Constitution by a two-thirds majority of the Maneaba (legislature) with the additional requirement of a referendum in respect of amendments to Chapter II rights (which include the provisions for freedom of expression).

KIRIBATI

12. (1) *Except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, and for the purposes of this section the said freedom includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference, freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference and freedom from interference with his correspondence.*
- (2) *Nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with or in contravention of this section to the extent that the law in question makes provision –*
- (a) *in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health;*
 - (b) *for the purpose of protecting the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons or the private lives of persons concerned in legal proceedings, preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of the courts, or regulating the administration or the technical operation of telephony, telegraphy, posts, wireless or broadcasting; or*
 - (c) *that imposes restrictions upon public employees, and except so far as that provision or, as the case may be, the thing done under the authority thereof is shown not to be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.*

Nauru

Section 3 of the Constitution of Nauru contains a broad statement of individual rights and freedoms, which includes freedom of conscience and expression. This freedom is restated in section 12 where it is subject to possible restrictions, which include generally accepted qualifications on freedom of expression. Section 12 also includes a provision that enables the regulation of the 'technical administration' or 'technical operation' of broadcasting and wireless. As indicated in relation to similar Kiribati provisions, this conveys a right to determine the technical and administrative means by which the media operates but would not allow the government to prohibit specific operators. Laws are permitted that restrict the 'establishment or use of ... wireless broadcasting or television equipment'. However, this should be read narrowly if Nauru is to comply with the international human rights standards that only allow restrictions on expression if they are 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society'. The restrictions under this provision should relate to technical standards, such as managing broadcast spectrum, not restrict particular media operators or content.

Section 84 provides for amendment of the Constitution by a two-thirds majority of the Parliament and that amendments of Part II, Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, must also be passed by a two-thirds majority at a referendum.

NAURU

3. *Whereas every person in Nauru is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, has the right, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest, to each and all of the following freedoms, namely –*
- (a) *life, liberty, security of the person, the enjoyment of property and the protection of the law;*
 - (b) *freedom of conscience, of expression and of peaceful assembly and association; and*
 - (c) *respect for his private and family life,*
- the subsequent provisions of this Part have effect for the purpose of affording protection to those rights and freedoms, subject to such limitations of that protection as are contained in those provisions, being limitations designed to ensure that the enjoyment of those rights and freedoms by a person does not prejudice the rights and freedoms of other persons or the public interest.*
12. (1) *A person has the right to freedom of expression.*
- (2) *Except with his consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his right to freedom of expression.*

- (3) *Nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with, or in contravention of, the provisions of this Article to the extent that that law makes provision –*
- (a) *that is reasonably required in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health;*
 - (b) *that is reasonably required for the purpose of protecting the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons or the private lives of persons concerned in legal proceedings, preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence or maintaining the authority and independence of the courts;*
 - (c) *that is reasonably required for the purpose of regulating the technical administration or technical operation of telephony, telegraphy, posts, wireless broadcasting or television or restricting the establishment or use of telephonic, telegraphic, wireless broadcasting or television equipment or of postal services; or*
 - (d) *that regulates the use of information obtained by public officers in the course of their employment.*

Niue

There is no reference to freedom of expression in the *Constitution Act 1974*.

Amendment of most constitutional provisions requires a two-thirds parliamentary majority and approval by electors in a referendum. (Some provisions, which do not relate to individual freedoms, also require a two-thirds majority in the referendum.)

Palau

The Constitution of the Republic of Palau makes specific reference to freedom of the press and, in an unusual provision, amplifies this freedom with reference to the protection of journalists' sources. These provisions appear under the heading fundamental rights. Amendment of the Constitution is by the initiation of Parliament or may arise through a popular initiative. There is no additional requirement in relation to amending the provisions of Article IV, Fundamental Rights.

PALAU

Article IV section 2. The Government shall take no action to deny or impair the freedom of expression or press. No bona fide reporter may be required by Government to divulge or be jailed for refusal to divulge information obtained in the course of a professional investigation.

Papua New Guinea

The Constitution of PNG makes reference to freedom of expression and publication in section 46(1). It is amplified in subsection 2 to expressly include the right to receive ideas and information and to freedom of the press and other mass communications media. The Constitution contains a provision that enables the government to pass legislation that would ensure 'reasonable access' for 'interested parties and associations' to the 'mass communication media'. This provision does not create any direct right but rather expressly provides the government with the powers necessary to enact legislation in this area to promote freedom of expression. There do not appear to be similar provisions in other constitutions, although the Marshall Islands *Political Broadcast Access Act*, which ensures that candidates for elected office shall have access to government-owned broadcasting services, is an example of the type of legislation that this PNG provision would permit.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

46. (1) *Every person has the right to freedom of expression and publication, except to the extent that the exercise of that right is regulated or restricted by a law –*
- (a) *that imposes reasonable restrictions on public office-holders; or*
 - (b) *that imposes restrictions on non-citizens; or*

- (c) that complies with Section 38 (general qualifications on qualified rights).
- (2) In Subsection (1), 'freedom of expression and publication' includes –
- (a) freedom to hold opinions, to receive ideas and information and to communicate ideas and information, whether to the public generally or to a person or class of persons; and
- (b) freedom of the press and other mass communications media.
- (3) Notwithstanding anything in this section, an Act of the Parliament may make reasonable provision for securing reasonable access to mass communications media for interested persons and associations –
- (a) for the communication of ideas and information; and
- (b) to allow rebuttal of false or misleading statements concerning their acts, ideas or beliefs, and generally for enabling and encouraging freedom of expression.

The Constitution makes very detailed provision for the circumstances in which the freedoms it contains, such as section 46, can be qualified in section 38 'general qualifications on qualified rights'. This section lists the specific public interests that might require a restriction on the constitutional freedoms and imposes the test that was adopted in the 2004 Tongan decision (discussed later in this Part), namely that the law be 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society'. In addition, any law that purports to restrict freedoms must achieve an absolute parliamentary majority to be validly enacted.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (cont)

38. General qualifications on qualified rights.

- (1) For the purposes of this Subdivision, a law that complies with the requirements of this section is a law that is made and certified in accordance with Subsection (2), and that –
- (a) regulates or restricts the exercise of a right or freedom referred to in this Subdivision to the extent that the regulation or restriction is necessary –
- (i) taking account of the National Goals and Directive Principles and the Basic Social Obligations, for the purpose of giving effect to the public interest in –
- (A) defence; or (B) public safety; or (C) public order; or (D) public welfare; or (E) public health (including animal and plant health); or (F) the protection of children and persons under disability (whether legal or practical); or (G) the development of under-privileged or less advanced groups or areas; or
- (ii) in order to protect the exercise of the rights and freedoms of others; or
- (b) makes reasonable provision for cases where the exercise of one such right may conflict with the exercise of another,
- to the extent that the law is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society having a proper respect for the rights and dignity of mankind.
- (2) For the purposes of Subsection (1), a law must –
- (a) be expressed to be a law that is made for that purpose; and
- (b) specify the right or freedom that it regulates or restricts; and
- (c) be made, and certified by the Speaker in his certificate under Section 110 (certification as to making of laws) to have been made, by an absolute majority.
- (3) The burden of showing that a law is a law that complies with the requirements of Subsection (1) is on the party relying on its validity.

Section 39 sets out the considerations that should be taken into account when any restriction on a constitutional freedom is to be made. The section expands on the concept of what might be 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society'. Specific reference is made to international human rights frameworks including the UN charter and UN and European statements on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (cont)

39. *'Reasonably justifiable in a democratic society', etc.*

- (3) *For the purposes of determining whether or not any law, matter or thing is reasonably justified in a democratic society that has a proper regard for the rights and dignity of mankind, a court may have regard to –*
- (a) *the provisions of this Constitution generally, and especially the National Goals and Directive Principles and the Basic Social Obligations; and*
 - (b) *the Charter of the United Nations; and*
 - (c) *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and any other declaration, recommendation or decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations concerning human rights and fundamental freedoms; and*
 - (d) *the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Protocols thereto, and any other international conventions, agreements or declarations concerning human rights and fundamental freedoms; and*
 - (e) *judgements, reports and opinions of the International Court of Justice, the European Commission of Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights and other international courts and tribunals dealing with human rights and fundamental freedoms; and*
 - (f) *previous laws, practices and judicial decisions and opinions in the country; and*
 - (g) *laws, practices and judicial decisions and opinions in other countries; and*
 - (h) *the Final Report of the pre-Independence Constitutional Planning Committee dated 13 August 1974 and presented to the pre-Independence House of Assembly on 16 August 1974, as affected by decisions of that House on the report and by decisions of the Constituent Assembly on the draft of this Constitution; and*
 - (i) *declarations by the International Commission of Jurists and other similar organizations; and*
 - (j) *any other material that the court considers relevant.*
-

Amendments to these provisions of the constitution — the 'qualified rights' provisions — require a two-thirds absolute majority (sections 13, 14, 17). This is a lesser amount than that which applies to amendments to what are referred to as 'fundamental rights' (eg, right to life section 35).

Republic of the Marshall Islands

The constitutional freedoms are expressed broadly and apparently without qualification. They extend to freedom of speech and make specific reference to freedom of the press.

Amendments to most constitutional provisions may be made by two-thirds majority of the Nitijela (legislature). But Article XII section 2 provides that amendment of Article II (and Articles I and X), in which the constitutional protections are contained, can only occur with the additional requirement of a constitutional convention and referendum with a two-thirds majority.

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Article II

Section 1.

- (1) *Every person has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and belief; to freedom of speech and of the press; to the free exercise of religion; to freedom of peaceful assembly and association; and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.*
- (2) *Nothing in this Section shall be construed to invalidate reasonable restrictions imposed by law on the time, place, place or manner of conduct, provided:*

- (a) *the restrictions are necessary to preserve public peace, order, health, or security or the rights or freedoms of others;*
- (b) *there shall exist no less restrictive means of doing so; and*
- (c) *the restrictions do not penalize conduct on the basis of disagreement with the ideas or beliefs expressed.*

Samoa

The Constitution of Samoa provides all citizens with the right to freedom of speech and expression in section 13. This right may be qualified in the specific circumstances outlined, which include the broad category of 'public order or morals'. Any such limitations, however, may only impose 'reasonable' restrictions. There is no explicit reference to the media in relation to the establishment of the freedom or in the provisions that enable its limitation.

Amendments to the Constitution can be made by a two-thirds majority of the Parliament, with no additional requirements in respect of those sections within Part II, Fundamental Rights.

SAMOA

13. (1) *All citizens of Western Samoa shall have the right –*
- (a) *To freedom of speech and expression; and*
 - (b) *To assemble peaceably and without arms; and*
 - (c) *To form associations or unions; and*
 - (d) *To move freely throughout Western Samoa and to reside in any part thereof.*
- (2) *Nothing in subclause (a) of clause (1) shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law in so far as that existing law or the law so made imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right conferred under the provisions of that subclause in the interests of national security, friendly relations with other States, or public order or morals, for protecting the privileges of the Legislative Assembly, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for preventing contempt of court, defamation or incitement to any offence.*

Solomon Islands

Section 12 of the Constitution of the Solomon Islands is worded so as to restrict any limitation on freedom of expression. That freedom of expression includes the freedom to receive ideas and information and to communicate ideas and information, without interference. The additional term 'without interference' may make the provision less emphatic than other constitutional provisions, but it would still enable the enactment of freedom of information legislation. These freedoms can be limited so as to enable the regulation of the 'administration or technical operation' of broadcasting and television, with the overall qualification that any such restrictions must be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.

The amendment of section 12 falls within those sections for which a three-quarter majority is required, as opposed to the two-thirds majority required for constitutional amendments more generally (s 61).

SOLOMON ISLANDS

12. (1) *Except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, and for the purposes of this of section the said freedom includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference, freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference and freedom from interference with his correspondence.*
- (2) *Nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with or in contravention of this section to the extent that the law in question makes provision –*
- (a) *in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health;*
 - (b) *for the purpose of protecting the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons or the private lives of persons concerned in legal proceedings, preventing the disclosure of*

information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of the courts, or regulating the administration or the technical operation of telephony, telegraphy, posts, wireless, broadcasting or television; or

(c) that imposes restrictions upon public officers,

and except so far as that provision or, as the case may be, the thing done under the authority thereof is shown not to be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.

The constitutional changes proposed in the Federal Constitution of the Solomon Islands Bill 2004 contain a specific provision for access to information as part of a more expansive statement of rights. Of particular interest are the provisions on freedom of expression, and the right of publication and opinion, which incorporate many of the principles that emerge from international human rights instruments. This reflects the increased recognition of the role that such measures have in strengthening civil society and increasing democratic participation. The broader implications of these human rights principles are discussed in greater detail in Part II.

In particular, important provisions exist in clause 40 — about media independence from government, in relation to editorial content and licensing procedures — and in clause 41, which sets out a strong right of access to information and requires legislation to be passed to give effect to such a right.

FEDERAL CONSTITUTION OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS BILL 2004

39. Freedom of expression –

(1) Every person has the right to freedom of expression, which includes –

- (a) freedom of the press and other media;*
- (b) freedom to receive or impart information or ideas;*
- (c) freedom of artistic creativity; and*
- (d) academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.*

(2) The rights provided for in subsection (1) do not affect the validity of any law or of official action related to –

- (a) the protection of national security, public safety, public order, public morality, public health or the orderly conduct of federal, state or municipal elections;*
- (b) the protection or maintenance of the reputation, privacy, dignity, rights or freedoms of other persons, including –*
 - (i) the right to be free from hate speech, whether directed against individuals or groups;*
 - (ii) the right of persons injured by inaccurate or offensive media reports to have a correction published on reasonable conditions established by law; and*
 - (iii) the right of persons to be free from offensive reporting of customs and traditions;*
- (c) preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence;*
- (d) preventing attacks on the dignity of individuals, groups or communities or respected offices or institutions in a manner likely to promote ill will between ethnic groups or communities or the oppression of or discrimination against any person;*
- (e) maintaining the authority and independence of the courts;*
- (f) the imposition of reasonable restrictions on the holders of public offices in order to secure the impartial and confidential performance of their duties;*
- (g) the regulation and technical administration of telecommunications;*

(3) In this section “hate speech” means an expression in whatever form that encourages or has the effect of encouraging unlawful discrimination.

40. Right of publication of opinion –

- (1) All persons shall be free to use all forms of the electronic and print media.*
- (2) No law may authorise –*

- (a) *the exercise of control over, or interference with any writer, photographer, editor or publisher of a newspaper or other media institution or agency; or*
 - (b) *harassment or imposition of any penalty against a person for any editorial opinion or view, or the content of any publication or dissemination.*
- (3) *Persons shall be entitled to broadcast or transmit electronic media, subject to any licensing procedures that –*
- (a) *are designed to ensure the necessary regulation of the airwaves; and*
 - (b) *are independent of control by political or commercial interests.*
- (4) *All state owned media shall be independent and impartial and shall afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.*
- (5) *No law may –*
- (a) *require the licensing of any form of publication or dissemination of information, comment or opinion;*
 - (b) *permit or impose censorship of any form of publication or dissemination of information, comment or opinion.*
- (6) *Laws may be made which regulate freedom to broadcast in order to ensure fair election campaigning or which regulate the production or viewing of films, videos, advertisements or other electronic media, or of live performances, to the extent necessary to protect the public interest.*

41. *Right of access to information*

- (1) *Every person has the right of access to –*
 - (a) *information held by or on behalf of any government; and*
 - (b) *any information that is held by another person and which is required for the exercise or protection of any right or freedom.*
- (2) *Every person has the right to demand the correction or deletion of untrue or misleading information, which affects the person.*
- (3) *Laws shall be made to give effect to this right, and may provide for reasonable measures in relation to the cost of making such information available.*

Tonga

The protection of freedom of speech and of the press in the Tongan Constitution is arguably the strongest statement of any of the Pacific Island constitutions. This is achieved by the emphasis it receives in section 7(1), namely that such freedoms shall be protected ‘for ever’. The freedom is reinforced by the constitutional amendment provision that precludes amendments that restrict this ‘law of liberty’. Case law, discussed below, shows that the freedom is still capable of being restricted by implied limitations on freedom of speech and the press. Similarly, subclause 3 must be read so as not to conflict with the freedoms in subclause 1.

The validity of section 7(3) was recently tested in the Tongan Supreme Court, as it appears to provide wide powers in relation to the control of the media. This case is discussed later in this Part and in detail in Part III. The court determined that any laws that were enacted in relation to the operation of the media needed to comply with the test that they be ‘reasonably justifiable in a democratic society’. In effect, section 7(3) should be read as saying it is ‘lawful to enact laws to regulate the operation of any media’ so long as any restriction on media freedom is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.

Section 79 provides for the amendment of provisions of the Constitution, other than those that affect the ‘law of liberty, the succession to the Throne and the titles and hereditary estates’. In this case a higher test arguably applies as it would require the amendment of both section 79 and section 7. The interpretation of this clause was also considered in the 2004 decision.

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7. (1) *It shall be lawful for all people to speak, write and print their opinions and no law shall ever be enacted to restrict this liberty. There shall be freedom of speech and of the press for ever but nothing in this clause shall be held to outweigh the law of slander or the laws for the protection of the King and the Royal Family.*
 - (2) *It shall be lawful, in addition to the exceptions set out in sub-clause (1), to enact such laws as are considered necessary in national security, public order, morality, privileges of the Legislative Assembly and to provide for contempt of Court.*
 - (3) *It shall be lawful to enact laws to regulate the operation of any media.*
-

Tuvalu

The Tuvalu Constitution creates a freedom of expression subject to a number of specific constraints. The interaction between the 'protection of Tuvaluan values' (section 29) and the freedom of expression is unclear. Given developments, such as recent cases discussed later in Parts 11 and 111, there is a strong argument that the scope of section 29 would have little effect on freedom of expression, and arguably no effect in relation to media and civil society discussion of issues about governance.

The amplification of section 24 so as to include freedom to communicate ideas and information appears to extend freedom of expression to the media. The freedom to receive ideas and information without interference is the same provision as in the Solomon Islands Constitution and would provide a head of power for the enactment of freedom of information legislation.

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority (section 8) with no special provisions for those sections within Part II, Bill of Rights.

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24. (1) *Subject to the provisions of this Part, and in particular to –*
 - (a) *subsection (3); and*
 - (b) *section 29 (protection of Tuvaluan values, etc.); and*
 - (c) *section 30 (provisions relating to certain officials); and*
 - (d) *section 31 (disciplined forces of Tuvalu); and*
 - (e) *section 32 (foreign disciplined forces); and*
 - (f) *section 33 (hostile disciplined forces); and*
 - (g) *section 36 (restrictions on certain rights and liberties during public emergencies), except with his consent no-one shall be hindered in the exercise of his freedom of expression.*
 - (2) *For the purposes of this section, freedom of expression includes –*
 - (a) *freedom to hold opinions without interference; and*
 - (b) *freedom to receive ideas and information without interference; and*
 - (c) *freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference; and*
 - (d) *freedom from interference with correspondence.*
 - (3) *Nothing in or done under a law shall be considered to be inconsistent with subsection (1) to the extent that the law makes provision –*
 - (a) *in the interests of –*
 - (i) *defence; or*
 - (ii) *public safety; or*
 - (iii) *public order; or*
 - (iv) *public morality; or*
 - (v) *public health; or*

- (b) for the purpose of –
- (i) protecting the reputations, rights or freedoms of other persons; or
 - (ii) protecting the privacy of persons concerned in legal proceedings; or
 - (iii) preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence; or
 - (iv) maintaining the authority or independence of the courts; or
 - (v) regulating the administration or the technical operation of posts or telecommunications.

Vanuatu

The Constitution of Vanuatu provides for freedom of expression subject to a narrow range of exemptions, being the 'legitimate public interest in defence, safety, public order, welfare and health'. No explicit reference is made to any right to communication nor to a right to information.

Amendment of the Vanuatu Constitution requires a two-thirds majority at which three-quarters of members are present. The requirement of a referendum attaches to certain amendments (the status of Bislama, English and French, the electoral system and the parliamentary system) but this does not include the sections that provide for fundamental rights.

VANUATU

5. (1) *The Republic of Vanuatu recognises, that, subject to any restrictions imposed by law on non-citizens, all persons are entitled to the following fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual without discrimination on the grounds of race, place of origin, religious or traditional beliefs, political opinions, language or sex but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and to the legitimate public interest in defence, safety, public order, welfare and health –*
- (a) *life;*
 - (b) *liberty;*
 - (c) *security of the person;*
 - (d) *protection of the law;*
 - (e) *freedom from inhuman treatment and forced labour;*
 - (f) *freedom of conscience and worship;*
 - (g) *freedom of expression;*
 - (h) *freedom of assembly and association;*
 - (i) *freedom of movement;*
 - (j) *protection for the privacy of the home and other property and from unjust deprivation of property;*
 - (k) *equal treatment under the law or administrative action, except that no law shall be inconsistent with this sub-paragraph insofar as it makes provision for the special benefit, welfare, protection or advancement of females, children and young persons, members of under-privileged groups or inhabitants of less developed areas.*

Relevant constitutional case law

While the express wording of constitutional provisions is significant, it is also important to understand the way in which courts are likely to interpret constitutional rights such as freedom of expression and freedom of the media. Rights of individuals to enjoy certain freedoms are not only to be found in the specific wording of a constitutional provision but will also be inferred from a body of human rights law. Internationally there are established principles for the protection of expression, as well as recognition that these rights are necessarily constrained by restrictions on speech in a number of circumstances.

An understanding of the implied rights and limitations that exist will illustrate that, while the wording of the constitutional provisions may vary, in practice the provisions might have more in common than at first appears. For example, with the exception of Niue, all Pacific Island

constitutions explicitly recognise a right to freedom of expression and/or of speech. International conventions and law provide guidance as to what such a right entails and principles for the enjoyment of this right have emerged from many different international human rights forums. This suggests there is considerable scope to develop a consistent approach to legislative mechanisms across the Pacific Island countries in relation to freedom of speech, media and information. The elements of any such approach are discussed in Part II.

Three key cases from the Pacific Island countries of Tonga, PNG and Samoa have involved judicial determinations as to whether legislative provisions or government action conflicts with the right to freedom of expression contained within each country's Constitution. The most recent and comprehensive of these is the 2004 Supreme Court of Tonga decision in the case of *Taione v Kingdom of Tonga*.⁴ The other cases are earlier decisions from Samoa and PNG. All three cases are analysed in Part III.

The cases illustrate that constitutional provisions are an important, though not the complete, protection for freedom of expression and of the media. It appears likely that Pacific Island courts will find that constitutional protection for freedom of expression is an important element of democratic governance, and that freedom of expression can only be restricted to the extent that is reasonably justifiable or necessary in a democratic society. A wide range of international human rights conventions and precedents can be drawn on to interpret what this might mean in any particular instance. The cases also emphasised the fact that a prior restraint on expression is rarely permissible and that a power to regulate is just that — it is not a power to prohibit access to, or operation of, the media. Further implications of these cases, together with international conventions, are considered in Part II, which analyses existing legislative frameworks in nine Pacific Island countries against a set of 10 related principles for the full enjoyment of freedom of expression and of the media.

PART II

LEGISLATIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The constitutional provisions that have been discussed in Part I represent both the scope and limitations of legislative powers in respect of the freedoms of expression and of the media. They provide the framework in which more detailed legislation can be enacted, as well as providing a remedy where either the legislature or the executive exceeds its powers to restrict expression.

As noted in the analysis of freedom of expression in the recent Tongan case (discussed in Part III), a fundamental principle is that any restriction on the freedom of expression must be no greater than is reasonably justifiable or necessary in a democratic society. Furthermore, only in very extreme circumstances is this likely to enable a prior restraint on the publication or broadcast of material. This was the basis on which the Tongan Supreme Court determined that the right to regulate the media could not be used in a manner that was effectively a prohibition.

Both the Tongan and the Samoan cases relied on international human rights conventions to determine the legitimate scope of legislative restrictions on freedom of expression. This is similar to the approach in section 39 of the PNG Constitution, which specifically incorporates a range of international human rights instruments for the purpose of determining whether any law 'is reasonably justified in a democratic society'.

It is widely accepted in international human rights law that freedoms should not only be protected, but that action on the part of government should enhance freedoms. For example, in order that the constitutional freedoms of expression and of the media are meaningful, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights requires that states 'adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized by the covenant'.⁵

The various provisions already cited in Part I make the link between individual freedoms and that of the media quite explicit, as well as the link between expression and information. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the right to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

The implications of this statement for government action to facilitate the enjoyment of all rights associated with freedom of expression are extensive. These ancillary rights include:

*the right to a diverse, pluralistic media; access to the means of communication; the right to practise and express one's culture; the right to participate in public decision-making; and the right to access information.*⁶

The media is not only a recipient of the right to freedom of expression but, as has been recognised in the cases and international conventions, it plays an important role in influencing the manner in which freedom of expression is enjoyed.

The right to practise and express one's own culture requires media diversity and access to the media. This is reflected in the following statement adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe:

*[S]tates have the duty to guard against infringements of the freedom of expression and information and should adopt policies designed to foster as much as possible a variety of media and a plurality of information sources, thereby allowing a plurality of ideas and opinions.*⁷

For this reason, international human rights literature encourages a diversity of media to ensure a plurality of opinions and to facilitate equitable access to the media. This is often translated into an expectation that there be three tiers of media within a society — public, commercial and community — and that licensing regimes should enable the coexistence of each form. This requires that the structure of licence fees does not function as a restriction on the ability of community media to operate. For example, the *African Charter on Broadcasting 2001* states:

*The legal framework for broadcasting should include a clear statement of the principles underpinning broadcast regulation, including promoting respect for freedom of expression, diversity, and the free flow of information and ideas, as well as a three-tier system for broadcasting: public service, commercial and community.*⁸

For the media to operate as a credible source of information it must have transparent relationships with government, with its consumers and with those entities and individuals on whom it reports. An independent complaints mechanism is one way of ensuring wider scrutiny of the media. In the case of public broadcasters or government print media this requires editorial independence and an arm's-length status as an independent body from government. It also requires a framework of regulation that is neutral across media and a licence allocation regime that is non-discriminatory and open to scrutiny. These principles have been the subject of observations by the UN Human Rights Committee, which, in 1997, made a clear statement of what it regarded as necessary in order to comply with the provisions of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights:

*With a view to bringing it into conformity with article 19 of the Covenant, [the Committee] recommends that the State party establish an independent broadcasting licensing authority, with the power to examine broadcasting applications and to grant licences in accordance with reasonable and objective criteria.*⁹

A more expansive comment was made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression when considering the features required of a broadcasting regime that would enable 'the right to seek, receive and impart information':

*There are several fundamental principles [relating to broadcasting] which, if promoted and respected, enhance the right to seek, receive and impart information. These principles are ... laws governing the registration of media and the allocation of broadcasting frequencies must be clear and balanced; any regulatory mechanism, whether for electronic or print media, should be independent of all political parties and function at an arms-length relationship to Government ...*¹⁰

Ten principles of open government and independent media

In order that the constitutional freedom of expression is to be fully realised in the Pacific Island countries, a comprehensive legislative framework is required. This section presents 10 principles that we have identified as emerging from this examination of international conventions and legal precedents in the area of human rights law, statements by United Nations bodies and other international rights organisations, and specific Pacific Island countries' constitutional provisions and case law. The principles outlined below also draw on the work of Article 19 — a UK human rights organisation committed to the strengthening of frameworks for the enjoyment of the provisions

of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, namely the right to freedom of expression.¹¹ The principles therefore reflect a consensus of views across international human rights sources on the legal framework necessary to protect freedoms of speech, media and information. Where consistent with the principles, the relevant recommendations from the Thomson Report are noted.¹²

The 10 principles are applied to the legislative frameworks in the nine Pacific Island countries of the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, PNG, the RMI, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The legislation relates to newspaper regulation (registration, corrections, prohibitions); broadcasting legislation (licence allocation, content requirements, complaints mechanisms); public broadcasters (status, ministerial directions, content provisions) and access to information and is listed in Appendix E. The analysis of the legislation seeks to identify those provisions that enhance freedom of expression and those that might be viewed as an improper constraint on freedom of expression and of the media. While all available current and proposed legislation for each of the nine countries was consulted (as listed in Appendix E), this Part uses notable examples to illustrate each of the principles.

Principle 1: Limited restrictions on freedom of expression

Restrictions must be no greater than is 'reasonably justifiable within a democratic society'.

Restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of the media cannot exceed the qualifications contained within the constitution. However these restrictions themselves, and any laws that are made under them, should also be subject to the test that they 'not exceed what is reasonably justifiable within a democratic society'. The PNG Constitution makes this reference explicit, as does Tuvalu in section 15 of its Constitution and that of the Solomon Islands in section 12(2). Justifiable restrictions will be those that a court considers are necessary in a democratic society. The Tongan case ruled that a qualification on expression that was to protect 'the cultural traditions of the Kingdom' exceeded what is reasonably necessary in a democratic society. The court also ruled that 'necessary' had a distinct meaning and set a higher test than the term 'expedient'. To allow restrictions on speech that were merely 'expedient' would exceed the acceptable qualifications of freedom of expression.

The Cook Islands Constitution enables restrictions on expression to be imposed 'in the interests of ... the general welfare ... of the Cook Islands', a provision that would also appear to exceed standards of reasonably justifiable or necessary:

Section 64.

(2) It is hereby recognised and declared that every person has duties to others, and accordingly is subject in the exercise of his rights and freedoms to such limitations as are imposed, by any enactment or rule of law for the time being in force, for protecting the rights and freedoms of others or in the interests of public safety, order, or morals, the general welfare, or the security of the Cook Islands.

The Samoan Constitution uses the term 'reasonable restrictions' as a test for any legislation that might constrain freedom of expression. This term would permit more restrictions on expression than the narrow and more common test of reasonably justifiable or necessary. However, it is likely that a court would interpret this provision in light of the widely accepted formulation, namely 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society'.

Section 13.

(2) Nothing in subclause (a) of clause (1) shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law in so far as that existing law or the law so made imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right conferred under the provisions of that subclause in the interests of national security, friendly relations with other States, or public order or morals, for protecting the privileges of the Legislative Assembly, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for preventing contempt of court, defamation or incitement to any offence.

Principle 2: Open entry to newspaper market

No absolute prohibition on entering the newspaper market other than administrative requirements such as the information concerning responsible parties.

The legislative framework in a number of countries requires that those responsible for the publication of newspapers register the publication. In most instances the details required merely

relate to the names and addresses of the persons responsible for the printing and publishing of a newspaper. Such provisions should pose no meaningful restriction on freedom of expression, and do not conflict with Principle 2.

For example, the *Kiribati Newspaper Registration Act 1988* requires that no paper can operate without the proprietors, printers and publishers being identified in an affidavit lodged with a Registrar of Newspapers. The affidavit is to contain the identity and addresses of certain parties associated with the production of the newspaper.

Section 3.

No person shall print or publish any newspaper unless and until the affidavit referred to under section 4 of this act has been registered in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

Section 4.

Before any person commences the business of publishing a newspaper, there shall be deposited with the Registrar an affidavit duly sworn to and signed respectively by —

- (a) the proprietor of such newspaper;*
- (b) the person intended to be the printer of such newspaper; and*
- (c) the person intended to be the publisher of such newspaper,*

and such affidavit shall be in the form or as near thereto as may be and shall contain the statement specified in the Schedule.

These provisions are not uncommon in the Pacific Island countries. However, in 2002 amendments to the *Newspaper Registration Act* inserted provisions that more closely regulated the content of newspapers and enabled the Registrar to strike newspapers off the Register in the event of a breach of this section. Further amendments in 2004, while retaining the content restrictions, removed the 'striking-off' power from the Registrar, leaving any offence against section 16 to be prosecuted through the courts.

Section 16.

(1) It shall be the duty of proprietor, publisher or printer to ensure as far as possible that the contents of a newspaper comply with the following requirements —

- (a) that nothing is printed which offends against good taste or decency or is likely to encourage or incite to crime or lead to disorder or to be offensive to public feeling;*
- (b) that the content presented with due accuracy and impartiality; and*
- (c) where an article contains matters affecting the credibility or reputation of any person that opportunity is preserved on the part of persons named or affected by to have this response included in the said article.*

This type of provision represents a shift from a purely administrative scheme of regulation to one that might be regarded as having a chilling effect on freedom of expression, contrary to Principle 2. This Kiribati legislation is discussed further when consideration is given to independent complaints mechanisms in Principle 9, below.

PNG requirements are also more onerous than mere administrative registration. All 'printing presses' in PNG are to be registered under the *Printers and Newspapers Act 1956* and no person shall publish a newspaper without having registered under that Act. Entities involved in the publication are required, under section 13, to enter into a recognizance. This is intended to cover any fine for a conviction or any damages that might be recovered against the publisher in a libel action. This may operate as a barrier to entry for small community newspapers.

Section 13.

Recognizances by printers, etc., of newspapers.

(1) Subject to Subsection (4), before the publication of a newspaper the printer and the publisher of the newspaper shall enter into a recognizance before and to the satisfaction of one of the persons referred to in Subsection (2) in the sum of K1,000.00, with two sufficient sureties in the same sum in the whole, conditioned that the printer or publisher pay —

- (a) any fine or penalty afterwards inflicted on him on a conviction; and*
- (b) any damages and costs afterwards recovered against him, for printing or publishing a libel in the newspaper at any time after the date of the recognizance.*

Both these styles of registration provisions are in contrast to the absolute prohibitions that have been enacted in Tonga and Vanuatu. Such prohibitions will clearly breach the principle against restricting entry to the newspaper market — in fact, the provision of the Tongan *Prohibited Publications Act* (Cap 54) was, in 2003, held to be unconstitutional and invalid as it restricted freedom of the press. The provision allowed a prohibition on the importation of any publication that was considered to be contrary to the public interest. The section read:

Section 3.

- (1) *If His Majesty in Council is of the opinion that the importation of any publication is contrary to the public interest, he may prohibit the importation of such publication.*

In a similar style, the Vanuatu *Newspapers (Restriction on Publication) Act* (Cap 156) deals solely with the creation of the offence of a non-citizen owning or publishing a newspaper in Vanuatu. However the Minister may, under section 1(2), give approval for a non-citizen to publish or own a newspaper, so the restriction is not absolute.

Section 1.

- (1) *Subject to the provisions of this Act a non-citizen shall not own or publish a newspaper in Vanuatu.*
- (2) *A non-citizen may publish or own a newspaper if he first obtains approval of the Minister responsible for newspaper production.*

Principle 3: No prior restraint on media content

No prior restraint on media content other than under general censorship classification schemes.

The circumstances in which legislation can lawfully enable the prior restraint of the media are extremely limited. Prior restraint could apply only where the consequences of publication or broadcast are of mammoth proportions. In the vast majority of situations, sanctions should apply only after the material that is the subject of complaint has been broadcast or printed.

One clear case where the prior restraint of the media is envisaged — in a form that would breach the principle against such restraint — appears in section 29 of the Solomon Islands *Television Act 1995*. It empowers the Television Board to demand any material intended for broadcast.

Section 29.

- (1) *A licensee shall supply to the Board on demand any material, including the script thereof, which is intended for broadcasting.*
- (2) *A licensee who is required to supply material under subsection (1) shall either –*
- (a) *supply the material in a form specified by the Board; or*
- (b) *make available on demand without charge such of its equipment as is necessary to enable the Board to view the material.*
- (3) *The Board may, if it is of the opinion that any program intended to be broadcast by a licensee may affect the peace or good order of the Solomon Islands, require the licensee to pre-record the program and submit it to the Board for approval before it is broadcast.*

While no other Pacific Island country's legislation makes such specific provision for the vetting of content, the possibility of prior restraint arises through a number of provisions that restrict content. It is conceivable that these provisions may operate as a prior restraint if an injunction was sought against a broadcaster (or publisher). Alternatively, licence conditions or regulations may make provision for material to be vetted where the powers in this regard are expressed extremely widely. A provision of the Vanuatu *Broadcasting and Television Act 1992* is one such example:

Section 54.

The Minister may make regulations in respect of all or any of the following matters:

- (d) *the control and supervision by the Minister of programs broadcast from private broadcasting station.*

The same concerns arise in relation to the wide powers contained within Part VIII, Social Regulation, of the Tonga *Communications Act 2000*. Section 71 enables the Minister to direct the department to determine content standards that are subject to the approval of the Minister. These content standards may then become a licence condition or be the subject of a direction by

the department (subject to the approval of the Minister) to the licensee. Of most concern are the provisions that relate to 'political and controversial content':

Section 84.

Subject to the approval of His Majesty in Council, the Minister may determine the extent and manner in which a licensee may provide political or controversial content.

These types of content provisions in relation to licences pose serious restrictions on freedom of expression.

Principle 4: Arm's length approach of regulatory bodies

An arm's-length approach from government to the issuing of broadcast licences.

The control of licence allocation is the fundamental manner in which governments have the ability to determine who operates the broadcast media. The transparency of the process of licence allocation is critical to the perception and reality of an independent media. This requires that licence cancellation is also a transparent process and the content of all licences are made available for public scrutiny.

In almost all of the nine countries considered here the decision regarding licences is that of the government, usually the relevant Minister, with minimal independent input or objective criteria. That means the principle of an arm's-length approach to issuing licences is breached.

In a number of instances the allocation of licences and establishment of a national broadcaster is combined in one piece of legislation. For example, the Cook Islands *Broadcasting Act 1989* establishes the Cook Islands Broadcasting Corporation and also makes provision for the granting of radio and television licences. The Tongan *Communications Act 2000* establishes the communications licensing and regulation framework for Tonga and includes the functioning of the Broadcasting Commission and the Department of Communications.

The procedure for licence allocation and revocation in Vanuatu is tightly within government hands, with the power to issue licences being granted to the Minister, with the approval of the Council of Ministers, by section 43 of the *Broadcasting and Television Act 1992*. In fact, section 44, which establishes a power of delegation, expressly excludes the Minister's powers to issue, revoke or suspend licences from being delegated. Additional power is granted to the Minister to impose conditions on licences under section 47, and section 48 creates wide powers to revoke licences:

Section 48.

Subject to subsection (2), the Minister may, by notice in writing to the licensee, suspend or revoke a licence granted under this part where he is satisfied that one of the following grounds exists:

(e) the licensee has failed to comply with any direction given by the Minister.

(g) it is advisable in the public interest for a special reason, to do so.

A similar provision exists in the PNG *Broadcasting Corporation Act 1973*, which, in section 6, empowers the Corporation to make recommendations concerning the granting of licences for broadcasting services. The combination of these powers of a minister to issue licences, attach conditions, issue directions and revoke or suspend licences places the government in a position of significant control over media activities and content. Whatever may happen in practice, the existence of this power creates a 'chilling effect' on media freedom. It is for this reason that licensing schemes should operate independently of government.

Only the Solomon Islands currently has a process for the allocation of licences that is delegated to a body independent of government and comes reasonably close to the principle of arm's-length licensing. The Solomon Islands *Television Act 1995* establishes a Television Board with the power to allocate licences and to attach conditions to that licence.

Section 6.

(1) The Board may on being satisfied that the applicant satisfies the requirements in respect of broadcasting grant a licence which shall be subject, in addition to the conditions set out in this Act, to such conditions as may be specified by the Board in the licence.

The composition of the Board is set out in section 4 and consists of both government and non-government representatives.

Section 4.

- (1) *The Minister shall for the purposes of this Act appoint a Board which shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be responsible for the proper administration of this Act.*
- (2) *The Board shall consist of –*
 - (a) *a Chairman who shall be the Comptroller of Posts and Telecommunications; and*
 - (b) *a representative from each of the following –*
 - (i) *The Ministry of Public Service;*
 - (ii) *The Solomon Islands Christian Association;*
 - (iii) *The Solomon Islands National Council of Women.*

Where the Minister considers that there is reason to revoke a licence, section 11 enables the Minister to request the Board to conduct an inquiry and to report to the Minister, however this is not a mandatory procedure. The transparency of the revocation process could be improved.

The Cook Islands Media Bill establishes a number of regulatory bodies with the overarching body being the Media Commission. The Commission is to be chaired by a barrister or solicitor, or a person holding other relevant qualifications. Membership of the Commission is determined by the Minister but requires consultation with the industry, political parties and public interest groups. The Bill also provides for the establishment of the Broadcasting Licensing Authority consisting of three members of the Media Commission. The Authority is the body that is responsible for the granting of broadcasting licences.

Clause 27.

- (1) *The functions of the Authority shall be to act in an impartial and fair manner and to grant or approve a transfer of a radio broadcasting license or a television broadcasting license to any person authorising that person to provide a radio broadcasting service or television broadcasting service.*
- (2) *A broadcasting license shall be issued upon such terms and conditions as the Authority may prescribe.*
- (3) *Upon receipt of an application for or a transfer of a broadcasting license, the Authority shall proceed to issue or transfer the license unless there are good reasons not to do so.*

It is worth noting that the Thomson Report recommended a slightly different approach: rather than establish a separate statutory entity to allocate licences, an ad hoc cross-party committee of Parliament could be established for the purpose of licence allocation. Licence terms would be made explicit in the licence and be enforced through the licence contract (para 4.4.3.4).

Principle 5: Transparent process of licence allocation

Transparent criteria for the allocation of broadcasting licences, including consistency of programming guidelines across all licence holders rather than specific conditions on individual licencees.

Ministerial power to impose conditions on licence holders enables governments to have considerable influence over the content of any individual broadcaster. An unrestricted power to impose licence conditions will breach this principle.

A better approach is taken by the Cook Islands *Broadcasting Act 1989*, which makes provision for a Programme Advisory Committee. The Committee establishes the broad parameters of programming.

Section 40.

- (1) *There is established by this Act a Programme Advisory Committee consisting of not less than 3 members nor more than 5 members appointed by the Minister.*
- (2) *The Programme Advisory Committee shall –*
 - (a) *advise the corporation and licensees on all aspects of the services authorized by their licences, including the nature and diversity of programmes, the suitability and the scheduling of programmes for the Cook Islands, and the hours of transmission of the services; and*
 - (b) *in consultation with the corporation and licensees, prepare and subsequently publish a set of programme guidelines.*

These guidelines may take the form of regulations under the Act. The mechanism whereby these guidelines are enforced is not made explicit in the Act, but it may well be by way of a licence condition or through regulations. However the process for the establishment of the Committee, by ministerial appointment, may not ensure an arm's-length operation. In contrast, the process of appointment proposed by the draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation Bill for the Corporation's Board ensures that the Board's membership represents the diversity of the community and emphasises its independence. The provisions of these clauses are included in the discussion under Principle 6, which deals with the independence of the government broadcaster.

Similar but more detailed provision is made in PNG for consistent programming guidelines. The PNG *Classification of Publication (Censorship) Act 1989* provides for content restrictions to apply across all media, although we are advised that this has rarely, if ever, been used in respect of the media. This legislation establishes a Censorship Board with a membership that includes a diverse representation of the community, some of whom are nominated by designated groups.

Section 4.

- (1) *There is established a Board called the Censorship Board.*
- (2) *The Board shall consist of –*
 - (a) *the Chief Censor or his delegate; and*
 - (b) *a member of the Police Force nominated by the Commissioner for Police; and*
 - (c) *an officer nominated by the Departmental Head of the Department responsible for education matters; and*
 - (d) *a member representing and nominated by the National Council of Women; and*
 - (e) *a member representing and nominated by the Melanesian Council of Churches; and*
 - (f) *a lawyer nominated by the Departmental Head of the Department responsible for justice matters; and*
 - (g) *a member representing the mass media industry; and*
 - (h) *a member representing and nominated by the National Cultural Commission; and*
 - (i) *a member representing and nominated by the National Youth Commission; and*
 - (j) *a psychologist nominated by the Departmental Head of the Department responsible for health matters; and*
 - (k) *two female members.*

Those undertaking prescribed activities — defined as publishing, operating a television station, radio station, cable television, film theatre or any other activity determined by the Minister — must be registered under the Act as a publication premises. The Censorship Board is able to determine standards to which publishing and broadcasting must comply under section 33.

33. (1) *The Board shall, from time to time, determine standards to which publishing and broadcasting of all publications shall conform.*
- (2) *In determining the standards under Subsection (1), the Board shall give effect, as far as possible, to –*
 - (a) *the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by a reasonable adult person in Papua New Guinea; and*
 - (b) *the principles that –*
 - (i) *an adult person is entitled to read and view what he wishes; and*
 - (ii) *a person is entitled to protection from exposure to unsolicited material that he finds offensive.*

Section 1 of the *Classification of Publication (Censorship) Act* acknowledges that the legislation represents a restriction on constitutional freedoms. To comply with the requirements for such restrictions, the section specifies that the purpose of the legislation is to give 'effect to the public interests in public order and welfare and that the law relates to a matter of national interest'.

Section 1.

Compliance with constitutional requirements.

(1) *This Act regulates or restricts the exercise of –*

- (a) *the freedom from arbitrary search and entry conferred by Section 44 of the Constitution; and*
- (b) *the freedom of expression conferred by Section 46 of the Constitution; and*
- (c) *the right to privacy conferred by Section 49 of the Constitution; and*
- (d) *the right to freedom of information conferred by Section 51 of the Constitution,*

and to the extent that the regulation or restriction is necessary, taking into account the National Goals and Directive Principles and the Basic Social Obligations, for the purposes of giving effect to the public interests in public order and welfare, is a law that is made for that purpose.

(2) *For the purposes of Section 29 of the Organic Law on the Provincial Government, it is hereby declared that this law relates to a matter of national interest.*

In stark contrast to these overarching approaches, section 10 of the *Fiji Television Decree 1992* enables the Minister to prohibit any individual television station from broadcasting any matter whatsoever, in what may be an entirely arbitrary manner. It clearly breaches the principle of consistent programming guidelines (see also the similar power in section 13 of the *Fiji Broadcasting Commission Act 1953* below, under Principle 6). Section 10 of the *Television Decree* reads:

Section 10.

- (1) *It shall be the duty of the licensee to ensure that the broadcasting of the broadcast matter by him complies with the direction given, from time to time, by the Minister.*
- (2) *The Minister may, in the interest of the general public, by notice given by telegram or in writing or by any form of communication prohibit a television station from broadcasting any matter, or matter of any class or character, specified in the notice, or may require such a station to refrain from broadcasting any such matter, and the station shall comply with the notice forthwith.*
- (3) *For the purposes of exercising his powers and functions under this decree, the Minister shall have the power to issue such directions and do such other things as he thinks fit as long as it is not in contradiction of this decree.*

It is worth noting that the Marshall Islands *Political Broadcast Access Act* ensures that candidates for elected office within the Marshall Islands shall have free access to government-owned broadcasting services. There is, however, no reference to ongoing access beyond the election period.

Section 208

[A]ny candidate for an elective office of the republic shall have free access to the use of government-owned and operated broadcasting facilities in the republic. Any program submitted for broadcasting by a candidate shall be broadcast as submitted without any preview or censorship or follow-up commentary by the government of the Marshall Islands.

This provision explicitly recognises and legitimises the role of opposing and diverse views in a democratic society and, at least at election time, allows greater scrutiny of government activities. There is no similar provision in any of the other countries, being the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, PNG, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, that have been the subject of this detailed examination.

Principle 6: *Independently operating public broadcaster*

A public broadcaster that operates independently of government.

The public broadcasters examined are in most cases subject to direction by government, through a relevant minister.¹³ There are also, in a number of cases, provisions that enable the minister to appoint the senior management of the broadcaster. As noted below, in Fiji and PNG the public broadcaster is subject to an unfettered power of direction by the Minister. This would also appear to be the case in Kiribati where the *Broadcasting and Publication Authority Act* provides, in sections 10 and 14, for ministerial directions. Section 24 of the Solomon Islands *Broadcasting Act* also contains a broad ministerial power of direction.

Contrary to these provisions, the principle of independent public broadcasting would see very limited ministerial powers (if any) to issue directions and appoint the broadcaster's board, along with a requirement that all such ministerial actions be reported to Parliament. There should be no government power to give directions relating to particular programs, news or current affairs coverage, or contracts for program provision. Such matters are within the broadcaster's own province.

The provisions of the Vanuatu *Broadcasting and Television Act 1992*, while enabling ministerial directions, also constrain their scope, with the Minister expressly prohibited from giving directions in relation to news and current affairs programming.

Section 41.

- (1) *The Minister may from time to time give general or specific directions in writing as to the performance of the duties or the exercise of the powers of the Corporation and it shall be the duty of the Corporation to comply with such directions.*
- (2) *Nothing in subsection (1) authorizes the Minister to give a direction in respect of –*
 - (a) *a particular programme;*
 - (b) *the gathering or presentation of news or the preparation or presentation of current affairs programmes; or*
 - (c) *contracts for the provision of programmes.*

A similar provision is contained in section 10 of the Cook Islands *Broadcasting Act 1989*. While there is no public broadcaster at present in the Cook Islands, however the provision is worth noting as it reinforces the position that ministerial directions should not be unfettered. Section 10 gave the Minister a restricted power of direction in respect of any matter of government policy. Such directions must be in writing, are limited in scope and specifically prevent the Minister from directing internal appointments. This is reinforced in section 12 of the Act, which excludes the position of general manager from the Minister's power to appoint directors. Any direction given by the Minister is required to be published in the annual report of the Corporation.

Section 10.

- (1) *In the exercise of its functions and powers the Corporation shall have regard to the general policy of the government in relation to broadcasting as communicated to the Corporation from time to time in writing by the Minister, and shall comply with any directions given by the Minister to the Corporation in writing pursuant to any such policy.*
- (2) *Nothing in subsection (1) shall authorize the Minister to give a direction in respect of*
 - (a) *a particular programme;*
 - (b) *the gathering or presentation of news or the preparation or presentation of current affairs programmes;*
 - (c) *the contracts for the provision of programmes;*
 - (d) *or the staffing of the corporation.*
- (3) *any direction given by the Minister under subsection (1) shall be included in the Annual Report provided to the Minister pursuant to section 29.*

Should the proposed reform of media legislation in the Cook Islands bring about the reinstatement of a public broadcaster, as has been reported, this provision may provide a useful precedent.

By way of contrast, section 7 of the PNG *Broadcasting Corporation Act 1973* provides that the Minister may prohibit the Corporation from broadcasting any matter. It does at least carry with this power a level of accountability in that any directions are publicly reported on by the Corporation.

Section 7.

- (1) *From time to time the Government shall advise the Corporation of its policies and priorities.*
- (2) *Subject to this Act, the Corporation shall broadcast from all stations under its control, or from such of them as the Minister specifies, any matter the broadcasting of which is directed by the Minister in writing as being in the national interest.*
- (3) *Subject to this Act, the Minister may, from time to time, by telegram or in writing –*
 - (a) *prohibit the Corporation from broadcasting any matter, or matter of any class or character, specified in the notice; or*

- (b) request the Corporation to refrain from broadcasting any such matter.
- (4) The Corporation shall include in its annual report all cases in which the powers conferred by Subsections (2) and (3) have been exercised, and all such cases shall be laid before the Parliament at the first meeting after receipt of the report by the Minister.

In addition, the PNG *Broadcasting Corporation Act 1973* provides that the Head of State appoints the Managing Director and Deputy Managing Director of the Corporation.

Section 21B

- (1) There shall be a Managing Director and a Deputy Managing Director of the Corporation who shall –
 - (a) be appointed by the Head of State, acting on advice; and
 - (b) be appointed for such period as the Head of State, acting on advice, determines; and
 - (c) hold office subject to good behaviour.

Section 13 of the Fiji *Broadcasting Commission Act 1953* provides an unrestricted power for the Minister to restrict the Fiji Broadcasting Commission's content. It also enables the Minister to require that the fact that a direction has been issued not to be disclosed.

Section 13.

The Minister may by notice in writing delivered at the principal office of the Commission prohibit the Commission from broadcasting any matter or matter of any class or character specified in the notice. Any such notice may specify whether or not the Commission may at its discretion announce that the notice has been given.

The Tuvalu *Media Corporation Act 1999* provides for a level of independence on the part of the Corporation with section 6 making a strong statement against a *general* ministerial power of direction. The section implies that directions are only permissible in circumstances where a statutory provision allows for a specific direction. For example, section 11 provides that the Minister appoints one of the directors as Chair of the Board. Nonetheless it does ensure a degree of transparency in the relationship with government.

Section 6.

- (4) Except as otherwise provided by or under this or any other Act, the Corporation and its Board are not subject to direction by or on behalf of the Government or any Minister thereof.

The draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation Bill approaches the issue of independence in two valuable ways. It sets out a process for the appointment of the Board of the organisation whereby the Minister can only appoint from persons nominated by non-government organisations and includes a provision that compels Board members to act independently. Given its focus on independence being achieved through the Board, it is examined below under Principle 7.

Principle 7: Diverse and independent management of public broadcaster

The boards of public broadcasters should be independent and consist of diverse community representation.

A fundamental issue with public broadcasting bodies is the extent to which they are able to function independently of government. Principle 6 is concerned with direct interference by government in the day-to-day operations of the broadcaster. Less direct influence can also occur through government control of the Board. For this reason, one of the important ways to promote independence is through provisions establishing an independent board with a diverse membership. The principle of board independence and diversity suggests that government powers to appoint, or remove, board members should be constrained. A useful model is provided by the draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Bill, discussed below.

Many of the public broadcasters are established as a body corporate with, in most cases, their boards appointed by government. For example, the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation is established under the *Broadcasting and Television Act 1992* as a body corporate. Its Board is appointed by the Prime Minister as are the chair and deputy chair. The general manager is appointed by the Corporation, with the approval of the Prime Minister.

The Tuvalu Media Corporation, which is established under the *Tuvalu Media Corporation Act 1999*, has the principal function of providing a national broadcasting service, which is to provide news and information coverage 'including the widest possible range of perspectives'. The Board of the

Corporation is appointed by the Minister, as is the chair and deputy chair. Section 11 of the Act enables the Minister to terminate the appointment of chair or deputy chair provided the reasons for so doing are disclosed. The general manager is appointed by the Board, however, this has to occur with the approval of the Minister.

In a similar approach, the PNG *Broadcasting Corporation Act 1973* establishes a national broadcasting corporation with the duty to 'provide balanced, objective and impartial broadcasting services'. The PNG Broadcasting Corporation is constituted as a statutory corporation with its board members appointed by the Head of State, who acts on government advice.

Section 12.

Constitution of the Board.

- (1) *The National Broadcasting Board shall consist of –*
 - (a) *the Managing Director, ex officio; and*
 - (b) *five members, appointed by the Head of State, acting on advice, by notice in the National Gazette; and*
 - (c) *the Departmental Head of the Department responsible for finance matters or his nominee.*
- (2) *A member appointed under Subsection (1)(b) –*
 - (a) *shall be appointed for a period of three years, and is eligible for re-appointment; and*
 - (b) *holds office subject to good behaviour.*

(As noted above, in relation to Principle 4, the Corporation is also empowered, at the request of the Minister, to make recommendations concerning the granting of licences for broadcasting services.)

As the above provisions suggest, no public broadcaster currently has complete independence from government. All are subject to direction to a greater or lesser extent although, as has been noted, the Tuvalu *Media Corporation Act* makes a positive statement that constrains the Minister's power of direction. The best example of an independent broadcaster is to be found in the draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation Bill, which includes changes to the means by which the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC) is constituted.

Clause 5.

The SIBC is an autonomous public institution which shall enjoy operational and administrative autonomy from any other person or entity, including the government and any of its agencies, and no person or entity shall seek to interfere with the members or staff of the SIBC in the discharge of their duties, or to interfere with the activities of the SIBC, except as specifically provided for by law.

Clause 8.

- (1) *Members of the board shall be appointed by the Minister after nomination by the following groups of one or more candidates each –*
 - (a) *the engineering profession;*
 - (b) *the Bar Association;*
 - (c) *religious authorities;*
 - (d) *young people's and student's associations;*
 - (e) *unions;*
 - (f) *women's representatives; and*
 - (g) *media workers.*

Provided that at least one representative nominated by each of the groups listed in this subsection shall be appointed to the board.
- (2) *The nominations and appointments process shall to the extent possible respect the following principles –*
 - (a) *the process shall be open and transparent;*
 - (b) *the list of nominees shall be published in advance and the public shall be given an opportunity to make representations concerning these candidates;*
 - (c) *membership of the board shall represent a broad cross-section of Solomon Islands society.*

- (3) No one shall be appointed to the Board if he or she –
- (a) holds an official office in, or is an employee of, a political party;
 - (b) holds an elected position at any level of government;
 - (c) holds a position in, receives payment from or has, directly or indirectly, significant financial interests in broadcasting or telecommunications; or
 - (d) has been convicted, after due process in accordance with internationally accepted legal principles, of a violent crime and/or a crime of dishonesty or theft, for which he or she has not been pardoned, unless five years has passed since the sentence was discharged;
- provided that individuals who have been nominated pursuant to sub-section (1) shall be given an adequate opportunity to take any necessary steps to remove a barrier to their appointment under this sub-section.

Clause 9

Independence of Members

- (1) All members of the Board shall be independent and impartial in the exercise of their functions and shall, at all times, seek to promote the Guiding Principles set out in section 6.
- (2) Board members shall neither seek nor accept instruction in the performance of their duties from any authority, except as provided by law.
- (3) Board members shall not use their appointment for personal benefit, or for the benefit of any party or entity other than the SIBC.

A significant difference between the proposal contained in the draft Solomon Islands Bill and the current provisions of the *Broadcasting Act 1996* is that the proposed framework sets up a much more independent entity and deals well with diversity of membership and transparency of process. It also removes the right of the Minister, presently contained in section 24 of the *Broadcasting Act 1996*, to prohibit the broadcasting of any matter.

Principle 8: Diversity of media outlets

A legislative and administrative framework that encourages diversity of media and recognises the existence of community broadcasting and its importance in ensuring the cultural and regional relevance of the media.

There is little formal acknowledgment of community broadcasting and only one instance where there is explicit reference to community broadcasting in any legislation. The Cook Islands *Broadcasting Act 1989* provides for the allocation of a community radio or television broadcast licence by the Minister if they are of the opinion that the public broadcasting corporation is unable to adequately cover a particular area of the Cook Islands.

Section 35.

- (1) *Where in the opinion of the Minister the Corporation is for any reason unable to adequately cover a particular area of the Cook Islands, the Minister may, subject to this Act, grant to a person a community television broadcast licence or a community radio broadcast licence authorising that person to provide a community television service or a community radio service (as the case may require) in a particular area by means of a transmission installation of no greater operating power than is necessary to cover that area.*

This provision suggests that community broadcasters should only operate in areas that the public broadcaster is unable to service. This does not fulfil the requirement of a diverse media, which would see all tiers of broadcasting — public, commercial and community — operating alongside each other.

PNG has a number of community radio stations. The application documentation for a Broadcast Service License and Transmitter License advises applicants that licences may be granted free of charge depending on the nature of the service that is to be provided. Non-commercial services would appear to be granted an exemption from fees, as an exercise of discretion on the part of the licensing body, Pangtel, which would be an important contributing factor to the size of non-commercial or community broadcasting in PNG.

Principle 9: Self-regulatory complaints mechanisms

All media complaints mechanisms must be transparently independent.

The media industry has developed self-regulatory bodies that are independent of government and any individual media outlet. Legislation, however, can provide a framework within which a self-regulatory scheme functions and provide enforcement mechanisms in the event that the self-regulatory process proves inadequate. There should not, however, be any role for the government or government agencies in such a framework; any appeal rights would be directly to the courts.

At present Fiji is the only Pacific Island country with an independently operating Media Council. However, contrary to the recommendations of the Thomson Report that the existing system of self-regulation continue but with the establishment of a new industry-funded body (para 4.6.2), the proposed Media Bill in Fiji incorporates the complaints procedures currently operated by the Fiji Media Council, which poses dangers of government control in relation to complaints.

There is currently no legislative example of a complaints mechanism in the style of a press or media council, but the short-lived Kiribati Newspaper Complaints Commission and the proposed provisions for the Cook Islands are important to note — see below. If a legislative approach is to be taken, the Cook Islands Bill may offer a useful example.

A common feature in legislation, however, is a mechanism for correction of errors. Under such provisions, an offence is committed if a newspaper declines to publish a correction, unless it has a defence under the relevant Act.

In a number of instances the ability to seek a correction is unrestricted. In Fiji, however, the right is solely that of the relevant Minister, which removes the approach even further from a self-regulatory complaints process. Section 3 of the *Fiji Press Correction Act* (Cap 107) enables the Minister, if they are of the opinion that an article in a newspaper is ‘false or distorted’, to require that the newspaper publish a statement ‘containing the facts considered by the Minister to be true’.

Section 3.

If any article, item, report, letter or advertisement, (hereinafter called the original article) is published in any newspaper which in the opinion of the Minister is false or distorted, he may by an order which shall be delivered at the principal office of the newspaper require to be published without charge in an issue of the newspaper to be named and in as prominent a position and manner as that in which the original article appeared a statement (hereinafter called the correcting statement) containing the facts considered by the Minister to be true which shall be delivered with the order:

Provided that –

- (a) the correcting statement as far as possible shall not contain more words than the original article and in no case shall contain more than double the number of words in the original article;*
- (b) the correcting statement shall be in the same language as the original article and shall not contain any comment or expression of opinion.*

Failure to publish the correcting statement is an offence. The person charged with an offence has the opportunity to raise defences. These include that the original article was true and not distorted, or that the correcting statement is not true.

A similar provision is contained in the *Kiribati Newspaper Registration Act 1988*, which, in section 12, enables any person who is of the opinion that facts contained in an article are false or distorted to request a correction. It is an offence not to publish such a direction; however, under section 13, a defence exists where, among other grounds, the original article was true and not distorted; or that the correcting statement is not true.

The Kiribati Act was amended in 2002 to establish the Kiribati Newspaper Complaints Commission, with members appointed by the Minister. Under section 21 of the Act the Commission was to receive complaints where a proprietor, publisher or printer is believed to have failed to comply with section 16, which, as was discussed under Principle 2, sets out detailed content restrictions.

21. (1) The Commission shall –

- (a) receive, consider and assess all complaints against the proprietor, publisher or printer relating to their failure to comply with section 16 of this Act;*
- (b) inquire into the causes and circumstances of such a complaint or complaints under section 16 of this Act against the proprietor, publisher or printer of a newspaper;*

- (c) *conduct hearings to bring about a settlement relating to such complaint or complaints;*
- (d) *recommend to the Registrar, for approval or otherwise, the striking off the affidavits register the names of the newspaper whose proprietor, publisher or printer have been the subject of a complaint under section 16 of this Act.*

However, two years later the legislation was again amended and the provisions that established the Complaints Commission were repealed.

The Cook Islands Media Bill provides a model for self-regulation with resort to an arbitrator if complaints cannot be resolved within an internal process.

Clause 43.

It is the duty of every publisher and broadcaster –

- (2) *to establish procedures for investigating formal complaints.*

It also requires that broadcasters and publishers establish a complaints body and provides recourse to an external body as well, the Media Standards Council.

Clause 41.

- (1) *The functions of the Council shall be to act in an impartial manner and –*

- (a) *to receive and determine formal complaints from persons who are dissatisfied with the outcome of complaints made to publishers and broadcasters under section 43 of this Act.*

Clause 42.

The complaints provisions in this Act are based on the following principles:

- (a) *broadcasters and publishers have a responsibility to deal with complaints relating to broadcasts and publications other than for advertisements, and must establish a proper procedure to deal with them;*

...

- (d) *an independent complaints procedure is not a substitute for proper consideration of complaints by the broadcaster and publisher.*

Principle 10: Access to government information

Access to information and open government is a necessary precondition of freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

A number of the constitutions examined in Part I express a right to freedom of expression in a manner that could be interpreted as including the right to freedom of information, although only two constitutions make specific reference to the right to information, those of Fiji and PNG. If the Solomon Islands draft Constitution is adopted this would bring the total to three. We also understand that the Cook Islands is preparing freedom of information legislation.

The Fiji Constitution contains a provision that requires the enactment of freedom of information legislation; however, we understand that the drafting process has been slow.

Section 174.

As soon as practicable after the commencement of this Constitution, the Parliament should enact a law to give members of the public rights of access to official documents of the Government and its agencies.

The Thomson Report was disinclined to recommend the introduction of a *Freedom of Information Act* as 'we are not convinced that such a move would be acceptable in Fiji at this stage' (para 4.10.7). Instead it recommended that there be an *Official Information Act* that would affirm the principle of access to information on the part of the public, and the media as its representative.

The PNG Constitution contains, in section 51, a detailed provision in relation to freedom of information. This provides for a general right to 'reasonable access' to government documents followed by a series of exemptions that are usually found in such schemes. The provision also requires that the government establish procedures whereby citizens can access documentation. In other words, there is an obligation on the government to make this freedom meaningful.

Section 51.

Right to freedom of information.

- (1) *Every citizen has the right of reasonable access to official documents, subject only to the need for such secrecy as is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society in respect of –*

- (a) matters relating to national security, defence or international relations of Papua New Guinea (including Papua New Guinea's relations with the Government of any other country or with any international organization); or
 - (b) records of meetings and decisions of the National Executive Council and of such executive bodies and elected governmental authorities as are prescribed by Organic Law or Act of the Parliament; or
 - (c) trade secrets, and privileged or confidential commercial or financial information obtained from a person or body; or
 - (d) parliamentary papers the subject of parliamentary privilege; or
 - (e) reports, official registers and memoranda prepared by governmental authorities or authorities established by government, prior to completion; or
 - (f) papers relating to lawful official activities for investigation and prosecution of crime; or
 - (g) the prevention, investigation and prosecution of crime; or
 - (h) the maintenance of personal privacy and security of the person; or
 - (i) matters contained in or related to reports prepared by, on behalf of or for the use of a governmental authority responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or
 - (j) geological or geophysical information and data concerning wells and ore bodies.
- (2) A law that complies with Section 38 (general qualifications on qualified rights) may regulate or restrict the right guaranteed by this section.
- (3) Provision shall be made by law to establish procedures by which citizens may obtain ready access to official information.
- (4) This section does not authorize –
- (a) withholding information or limiting the availability of records to the public except in accordance with its provisions; or
 - (b) withholding information from the Parliament.

International human rights law recognises that access to information is a crucial aspect of the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms. The right to information is entrenched in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights where it is expressed as the right to 'seek, receive and impart information'. This right is amplified in the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, which states that 'everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds'.

The freedom to 'seek, receive and impart' has been interpreted as 'imposing a positive obligation on states to ensure access to information, particularly with regard to information held by government in all types of storage and retrieval systems'.¹⁴ Further consideration of this right by the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur produced a set of principles on freedom of information, key aspects of which are summarised below.¹⁵

UN Principles on Freedom of Information

1. Public bodies have an obligation to disclose information and every member of the public has a corresponding right to receive information;
2. Freedom of information implies that public bodies publish and disseminate widely documents of significant public interest, for example, operational information about how the public body functions and the content of any decision or policy affecting the public;
3. A refusal to disclose information may not be based on the aim to protect Governments from embarrassment or the exposure of wrongdoing;
4. All public bodies should be required to establish open, accessible internal systems for ensuring the public's right to receive information;
5. The law should provide for strict time limits for the processing of requests for information and require that any refusals be accompanied by substantive written reasons for the refusal(s);
6. The cost of gaining access to information held by public bodies should not be so high as to deter potential applicants and negate the intent of the law itself;

7. *The law should establish a presumption that all meetings of governing bodies are open to the public;*
8. *The regime for exceptions provided for in the freedom of information law should be comprehensive and other laws should not be permitted to extend it;*
9. *Individuals should be protected from any legal, administrative or employment related sanctions for releasing information on wrongdoing.*

These principles highlight the fact that governments should adopt a proactive approach to the dissemination of information rather than solely respond to requests for documents. While a comprehensive regime of freedom of information may impose excessive compliance requirements on smaller countries, the principles of access to information and transparent government processes can be embraced in a number of alternative ways. Often referred to as ‘sunshine legislation’, this can require public hearings in relation to licence determinations, the full disclosure of licence conditions and other policies that would enable information to be freely accessible. In some information-access regimes government departments are required to ‘actively disclose, publish and disseminate ... information of general public interest even when not asked for.’¹⁶

The precise form that access to information legislation takes varies considerably, and may depend on the administrative capacity of government. However, there is widespread support for its implementation as a necessary element of transparency in the operations of a democratic society.

Conclusion

Some provisions in existing legislation provide guidance in implementing the principles for freedom of expression and the media.

It might be useful to think of the various provisions discussed in the above analysis as providing the basis for a ‘best practice’ regime of media laws, under the 10 related principles relating to freedom of speech, freedom of the media, and freedom of information:

- Principle 1:** Limited restrictions on freedom of expression — restrictions must be no greater than is ‘reasonably justifiable within a democratic society’.
- Principle 2:** Open entry to newspaper market — no absolute prohibition on entering the newspaper market other than administrative requirements such as information concerning responsible parties.
- Principle 3:** No prior restraint on media content, other than under general censorship classification schemes.
- Principle 4:** Arm’s-length approach of regulatory bodies — an arm’s-length approach from government to the issuing of broadcast licences.
- Principle 5:** Transparent process of licence allocation — transparent criteria for the allocation of broadcasting licences, including consistency of programming guidelines across all licence holders rather than specific conditions on individual licences.
- Principle 6:** Independently operating public broadcaster — public broadcasters should operate independently of government.
- Principle 7:** Diverse and independent management of public broadcaster — the boards of public broadcasters should be independent and consist of diverse community representation.
- Principle 8:** Diversity of media outlets — a legislative and administrative framework that encourages diversity of media and recognises the existence of community broadcasting and its importance in ensuring the cultural and regional relevance of the media.
- Principle 9:** Self-regulatory complaints mechanisms — all media complaints mechanisms must be transparently independent.
- Principle 10:** Access to government information — access to information and open government is a necessary precondition of freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

Alan Fisher Taione and others v The Kingdom of Tonga

The decision is dealt with here in some detail as it provides a useful illustration of the interaction between the Constitution of Tonga and broader legal principles. The case involved a constitutional challenge to the validity of two pieces of legislation, recently enacted with the specific purpose of restricting the content of media in Tonga. Determining the validity of these two Acts also required the court to assess whether a third piece of legislation, another Act that had purported to amend the constitution in order to enable the passage of the two media Acts, was in fact validly made under the Constitution.

The case turned on specific provisions within the Constitution that set out the process and scope of constitutional amendments. The court was clear that the provisions of other constitutions were not directly relevant to its deliberations on constitutional amendment. However, in the course of its decision the court was required to consider the scope of implied freedoms and restrictions on speech within the constitutional setting. In so doing, the court made reference to a wide body of Pacific and international law.

In October 2004 the Supreme Court of Tonga determined that both the *Media Operators Act 2003* and the *Newspaper Act 2003* were unconstitutional. These two pieces of legislation were passed by Parliament together with a third Act that amended the Constitution with the aim of ensuring the constitutional validity of the media Acts. However, the constitutional amendment itself was deemed invalid, in part, because it purported to restrict fundamental liberties in the Constitution, described in section 79 as the 'law of liberty'.

The relevant constitutional provision is clause 7, which prior to the 2003 amendment had read:

Freedom of the press

7. *It shall be lawful for all people to speak, write and print their opinions and no law shall ever be enacted to restrict this liberty. There shall be freedom of speech and of the press for ever but nothing in this clause shall be held to outweigh the law of defamation, official secrets or the laws for the protection of the King and the Royal Family.*

Thus, prior to 2003 the Constitution provided for free speech and, in its express terms, allowed only limited restrictions on speech (in relation to defamation, official secrets and protecting the King). The amending legislation added two subclauses that aimed to allow greater restrictions on speech. It was thought these new constitutional provisions would make the two more restrictive media Acts constitutionally valid. The amended clause 7 read:

Freedom of the press

7. (1) *It shall be lawful for all people to speak, write and print their opinions and no law shall ever be enacted to restrict this liberty. There shall be freedom of speech and of the press for ever but nothing in this clause shall be held to outweigh the law of defamation, official secrets or the laws for the protection of the King and the Royal Family.*
- (2) *It shall be lawful, in addition to the exceptions set out in sub-clause (1), to enact such laws as are considered necessary or expedient in the public interest, national security, public order, morality, cultural traditional of the Kingdom, privileges of the Legislative Assembly and to provide for contempt of Court and the commission of any offence.*
- (3) *It shall be lawful to enact laws to regulate the operation of any media.*

While Tonga is in the unusual position of being a constitutional monarchy, the elements of this provision follow a pattern shared by many Pacific Island constitutions. A general freedom of expression is established, which is then subject to explicit limitations that take a variety of forms in the different constitutions. Of course, it is possible to amend a constitution, provided the constitutionally prescribed method of amendment is followed. Given the very strong statement in the Tongan Constitution in support of freedom of speech and the press, any regulation of the media in Tonga for purposes other than those specified would require a constitutional amendment.

Principles articulated in the case

In determining whether these amendments represented an unjustified restriction on freedom of expression, the court relied on two basic principles: a general presumption against prior restraint on publication; and a requirement that any limitations on freedom of expression need

to be founded in the 'proper and appropriate interpretation of the constitution'. While the court considered that there was considerable authority in Tongan law that upheld the principle of freedom of expression, it also referred to general principles from other jurisdictions. The court felt it necessary to refer in some detail to a number of cases in order to emphasise the broad and respected authority that supported these considerations.

It was also necessary for the court to address the issue of whether the concept of freedom of expression as it appears in the Constitution was intended to be interpreted in a Western sense. The Kingdom of Tonga had argued that an interpretation of the provision should reflect 'Tongan culture'. It was unnecessary for the court to determine whether such considerations would have produced a different interpretation as it determined that at the time of the adoption of the Tongan Constitution it was clearly envisaged that a Western interpretation would apply. Nonetheless the court observed that 'freedom of expression is no longer only a Western concept'.

Prior restraint

The court noted that there is a general presumption that any prior restraint on publication would conflict with freedom of expression. This is not to say that there cannot be sanctions that apply in the event that a publication (or broadcast) is in breach of the law of defamation or laws relating to obscenity, for example. Reference was made to a previous judgment of a Tongan Court, which had quoted from historical English material:

*The liberty of the press is indeed essential to the nature of a free state; but this consists in laying no previous restraints upon publications, and not in freedom from censure for criminal matter when published.*¹⁷

Further support for press freedom was found in comments of Lord Bridge in the Privy Council:

*In a free democratic society it is almost too obvious to need stating that those who hold office in government and who are responsible for public administration must always be open to criticism. Any attempt to stifle or fetter such criticisms amounts to political censorship of the most invidious and objectionable kind.*¹⁸

Lord Bridge then cited a House of Lords decision to propose that the guiding principle for prior restraint of publication was that,

*while occasionally necessary in serious cases, is a drastic interference with freedom of speech and should only be ordered where there is substantial risk of grave injustice.*¹⁹

It should be noted that these references appear to be drawn from injunction proceedings (where orders were sought to prevent publication when it was anticipated that publication would give rise to a legal complaint), rather than cases challenging a legal framework that would entrench prior restraint. In considering the validity of such legislation, it could be assumed that even stronger grounds would be needed.

Interpretation of constitutional provisions and implied restrictions

In the view of the court, a constitution is to be regarded as having formulated a balancing act between the rights of the individual and the democratic rights of the majority. In this case, that balance specifically relates to the balance between individual freedom of expression and the acceptable limitations that may apply to it. The court itself does not make this judgment: 'the judicial task is to interpret the constitution in order to determine where the balance is drawn, not to substitute the judges' views where it should be drawn'.²⁰

The court stated that the *European Convention on Human Rights* provides guidance as to the appropriate scope of exceptions to freedom of expression, in particular that they 'be necessary in a democratic society' and that they fall within specific categories, as discussed below.

Constitutionality of media legislation

The Constitution of Tonga provides in section 82 that any legislation that is inconsistent with the Constitution shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void. Clause 79 of the Constitution establishes the mechanism for amendment:

Amendments to the constitution

79. *It shall be lawful for the legislative assembly to discuss amendments to the constitution provided that such amendments shall not affect the law of liberty, the succession to the throne and the titles and hereditary estates of the nobles.*

The task of the court, therefore, was to determine whether the relevant legislation had been passed in accordance with the Constitution and whether it was consistent with the Constitution. There was never any doubt that the legislature had the power to amend the Constitution. However, one issue was whether the amendment complied with the provisions of the Constitution that set out how amendments could be made. This was significant because the amendment purported to affect fundamental liberties. As such it would require a very explicit amendment of those provisions that protected the law of liberty, namely clause 7 and clause 79.²¹ It was held the constitutional amendment failed this step.

The case then turned to whether there were any implied limitations on the freedoms of speech and the media that would save the constitutional amendment. The amendment would then be seen to not conflict with the 'law of liberty'. The implied limitations are those that are 'necessary in a democratic society'. A 'pressing social need' must be established to meet the test of necessity. Wide authorities were referred to in relation to these concepts: all established that there were indeed limitations on both freedoms irrespective of whether there was any specific qualification in the constitution itself.²²

It was held that an interpretation of the extent of the implied limitations on the freedoms conferred by clause 7 of the Tongan Constitution should be based in English common law and in accordance with Article 10(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Article 10 of this Convention provides guidance as to the appropriate scope of exceptions to freedom of expression, in particular that they 'be necessary in a democratic society' and that they fall within specific categories. The Kingdom argued that, because the Singapore Constitution provided the precedent for the amended clause 7(2), the limitations expressly contained in that Constitution should provide the court with guidance. This position was rejected, as was information on the circumstances of other countries, on the basis that the task was one of interpreting the Tongan Constitution. Notwithstanding this focus on the Tongan Constitution, the court drew on established English and European approaches to free speech and legal limitations on speech.

Article 10(2) of the European Convention reads:

*The exercise of [freedom of expression], since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or the rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.*²³

The court examined the exceptions to free speech and free press contained in the new clause 7(2) of the Tongan Constitution. It considered that these exceptions fell into one of two categories: those that were 'within the common law understanding of implied exceptions to freedom of expression'; and those that were not. Reliance was placed on the precise wording of Article 10(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights for the purposes of making this judgment.²⁴ As a result, national security, public order, morality, privileges of the legislative assembly and contempt of court were considered to be acceptable limitations on speech. Therefore, they did not conflict with the entrenching constitutional provisions that protected the law of liberty. On the other hand, the provisions that referred to the public interest, the cultural traditions of the Kingdom, and the commission of any offence were considered to be beyond any implied exceptions to freedom of expression. The term 'expedient' was also considered to exceed what is intended by the term 'reasonably necessary' and could enable unwarranted restrictions on expression. It, together with the other three terms, was declared void.²⁵

Clause 7(3) read, 'it shall be lawful to enact laws to regulate the operation of any media'. The court considered that this could enable laws to be enacted that would conflict with freedom of expression and, in particular, may constitute prior restraint of freedom of expression. However, because of the implied limitations on speech, and the presumption of constitutionality, the court determined that this clause did not necessarily conflict with the entrenching provisions of the Constitution. Any legislation that was enacted under the provision, however, 'must be subject to the implied term of a pressing social need, and ... [be] ... no more than proportionate to the legitimate aim being pursued and ... [not involve] ... prior restraint of freedom of expression, except in cases of clear and present danger'.²⁶

The court then turned to the validity of the two pieces of legislation that had been enacted in reliance on the amended clause 7. The court determined that its rulings on the validity of the constitutional amendment were consistent with the general common law position on the interpretation of freedom of expression and its implied limitations. That is, the court would have conducted the same analysis of the allowable limitations to free speech under the older form of clause 7. The fact that the constitutional amendment to clause 7 had not come into effect prior to the passage of the media legislation therefore had no practical implications in the case. The court made an assessment of the *Newspaper Act* and *Media Operators Act* based on clause 7 prior to its amendment.

Media Operators Act 2003

The court determined that this Act, on its face, had the sole purpose of restricting the issuing of licences to operate a newspaper. It completely prohibited the grant of a licence to a non-Tongan subject or a foreign corporation. This provision was considered clearly inconsistent with clause 7 'because it prevents certain people from exercising freedom of the press, and thus prevents the public from having access to information and comment freely'.²⁷ Rather than regulate newspapers, or those that own them, the court described this provision as amounting to a blanket prohibition that made no attempt at all at regulation. Specifically the court determined that:

*I do not consider ... that such a prohibition is necessary in terms of any of the factors in clause 7(2) or a pressing social need, is no more than proportionate to the legitimate aim being pursued, and does not involve prior restraint of freedom of expression ...*²⁸

An argument was made that, because the legislation regulated owners rather than writers, it did not represent a restriction on freedom of the press. This argument was rejected. The court declared the Act void because the relevant provision of the Act could not be read down as subject to an implied term, and the relevant provision could not be severed from the rest of the Act.

Newspaper Act 2003

This Act was more substantial with its principal provisions covering responsibility and standards, newspaper licences, and powers of authorised officers. Two specific sections were singled out for attention by the court. Section 8 enabled the Minister, together with Cabinet, to determine a very wide range of content standards, including 'the representation of Tongan culture and national identity'. This was identified as a clear example of prior restraint with very extensive scope and it could not be considered, in its application, to fall within any recognised exception to freedom of speech.

Section 12 was headed 'censorship' and prohibited a wide range of content that

is indecent or obscene, displays excessive violence, is blasphemous, is treasonous or seditious, invades the privacy of an individual without that individual's consent, is defamatory, is not honest, fair, independent and does not respect the rights of others or contravenes the laws of the kingdom.

The court determined that some provisions in section 12 may fall within recognised exceptions to freedom of expression but others, in particular 'invading privacy' and content which 'is not honest or fair', were referred to as 'breaking new ground'. It was of great concern that the provision made actions criminal that were already the subject of offences in other legislation. While the court was of the view that some aspects of the legislation may be severable, the internal structure of the Act did not permit the remaining provisions to stand on their own. It was determined that the objectionable parts of the Act were so extensive that the whole of the Act would need to be declared void.

The judge expressed regret at having to make these declarations and offered some cautionary words regarding the responsibilities of the press:

*Free speech means speech hedged in by all the laws against defamation, blasphemy, sedition and so forth, ie freedom governed by law. It is equally important freedom of the press does not mean that a newspaper has a license to publish what it wants, when it wants, about whom it wants, and how it wants in any improper, mischievous or illegal manner: it is not limitless.*²⁹

Broad conclusions from the case

A constitution provides the basis for determining freedoms and responsibilities. Freedom of expression has implied limitations that are founded in common law and international covenants

— these include the laws on defamation, blasphemy, sedition and those that are necessary in democratic society. The limitations are also the subject of qualifications and, in particular, that limitations on speech should not establish prior restraints on publication.

A constitutional provision that enables the ‘regulation of the media’ is not necessarily in conflict with a provision that protects freedom of the media. However, if a constitutional provision allowing regulation is used to enact legislation that effectively enables the prohibition of specific media, then such legislation will be unconstitutional.

It should be noted that the following specific characteristics of the Tongan Constitution influenced the outcome of this decision:

- The explicit references to freedom of speech and of the press in the Constitution.
- The narrow exceptions to these freedoms that were explicitly made within the Constitution.
- The entrenching provision in relation to laws of liberty, which prevented amendments that would limit these freedoms.

Although the Tongan decision is limited to the specific provisions of its Constitution, the framework that was applied is a useful one for considering the provisions within the constitutions of the Pacific Island countries. The reliance on international principles of human rights and the requirement that any limits on speech meet a test of being necessary in a democratic society are particularly relevant aspects.

Access to government-owned media: Efi v Attorney-General of Samoa

In *Efi v Attorney-General of Samoa*, the then leader of the opposition in Samoa complained that he was being denied his constitutional rights by being refused access to the state-owned media, which consisted of television station Televisé Samoa, Radio 2AP and the *Savali* newspaper.³⁰ The case was determined on the basis that the proceedings were brought in the applicant’s public and representative role, and that his status as Leader of the Opposition gave him grounds to have access beyond what another citizen might expect. This was because part of his responsibilities extended beyond his own ‘electorate’. Under Part II Article 4 of the Samoan Constitution, application may be made to the Supreme Court for orders to secure the rights established under Part II, which include the right to free speech and expression.

The complaints covered a period of two administrations. Evidence was led as to various occasions on which the applicant had been refused access to the media. Evidence was also given of statements by the then, as well as the current, Prime Minister that required the state-owned media outlets to consult with the Prime Minister before access was given. This evidence included statements made by both Prime Ministers and recorded in Hansard and affidavit evidence.

In its interpretation of the right to ‘freedom of expression’ the court drew on judicial findings from Australia, Belize, India, the Privy Council (in relation to Antigua and Barbuda) and the USA. The principle that the court relied upon from these cases was that the freedom to distribute information, or the liberty of circulation, was a necessary part of the freedom of expression.³¹ It acknowledged the role that television plays as a medium for the circulation of ideas and dissemination of information and that the ‘the enjoyment of freedom of expression therefore includes freedom to use such a medium’.³²

The importance within a democratic society of ensuring that those in government are open to criticism was emphasised by the court, along with a recognition that an aspect of the criticism levelled at the government by its opponents will always be to undermine confidence in that government.³³ The court explicitly rejected an argument that the Constitution ensured the rights of individuals by providing for a share of political power, citing with approval the comments of Archibald Cox (in *The Court and the Constitution*) that had been quoted in the Australian High Court:

*Only by uninhibited publication can the flow of information be secured and the people informed concerning [people], measures, and the conduct of government ... Only by freedom of speech, of the press, and of association can people build and assert political power, including the power to change the men that govern them.*³⁴

Summarising the conclusions from these cases, the court identified the key aspects of freedom of expression (and freedom from discrimination) as being ‘the absence of restraint, fetter, hindrance, censorship, disability, inhibition or restriction’. Applying these principles to the evidence, the court found that the previous administration had denied the Opposition Leader his constitutional rights

by effectively banning him from government-owned media. This arose through requirements that the Prime Minister's permission be first obtained. No such finding was made in respect of the present government.

Rather than set out the exact nature of the rights to, and limitations of, media access to be enjoyed by the Opposition, the court provided the applicant with the right to make urgent application to the court if he considered that these rights were being denied. This was, the court considered, necessary as a guide

*for the Government itself and the Heads of government controlled media corporations, departments and agencies who need to tread the sometimes ill-defined path between responsibility to the Government of the day, whom they must serve, on the one hand, and accountability and the preservation of fundamental rights under the Constitution, on the other hand.*³⁵

Constitutionality of prohibition on television in Papua New Guinea

In 1985 a contract was signed between the Nuigini Television Network (NTN) and the PNG government for the establishment of a commercial television station. A licence was granted under the *Radiocommunications Act* and broadcast was to commence on 14 July 1986. On 10 July, after a change of government, regulations were passed under the *Radiocommunications Act* that sought to prohibit broadcast until 31 January 1988. These regulations were declared invalid as they exceeded the scope of the principal Act, which was to regulate, as opposed to prohibit, broadcasting.

On the day of the court decision ruling the regulations invalid, the Parliament passed the *Television (Prohibition and Control) Act 1986*, which prohibited television broadcasts until 31 January 1988. This was challenged in a subsequent case on the grounds that it was inconsistent with sections 46 and 38 of the PNG Constitution. Section 46 provides for freedom of expression and section 38 sets out the basis on which the rights granted by the Constitution can be qualified. The court decided that the Act was unconstitutional in that it contravened section 38.³⁶

The government argued that the legislation was in fact a licensing scheme and not a prohibition — this argument was rejected emphatically, with the Act described as having 'prohibited the right of the applicants to communicate ideas and information through the operation of a television station. If this is not a direct affront to the exercise of the freedom of expression, then I don't know what is'.³⁷

The question then became whether the restriction could be said to fall within section 38, which sets out the grounds on which the rights in the Constitution can be limited. The section places the onus of proof on the party that is seeking to establish that the restriction is valid. The court noted that this burden indicated the significance that the Constitution attaches to fundamental freedoms.

Section 38 of the Constitution requires that, where a law is made for the purpose of restricting a right or freedom, then that law must specify the right or freedom that it seeks to regulate or restrict and be passed by an absolute majority. The purposes for which laws can be made that regulate or restrict rights or freedoms are set out in section 38 as 'to give effect to public interest in defence, public safety, public order etc; to protect the exercise of the rights and freedoms of others and to make reasonable provision for cases where the exercise of one such right may conflict with the exercise of another'.

The court acknowledged that freedom of expression may be regulated or restricted by law 'to the extent that the regulation or restriction is necessary', under section 38(1)(a). The court determined that 'necessary' here would imply 'reasonably necessary', and concluded that one test of whether the restriction is necessary is whether there may be another way of protecting the public interest without imposing the restriction on expression. The necessity of the provision involved consideration of the impact that television would have on the people of PNG, the concern that television would be harmful to the culture and language of the people and that, prior to the agreement being made with NTN, there had been no assessment of the impact that television would have on PNG. It was considered that the concerns expressed by the government were reasonable and that the state could indeed regulate to protect the population from the more harmful aspects of television. This represents an alternative to the absolute prohibition that the government had proposed in the challenged legislation.

Furthermore, the court considered whether the law was 'reasonably justifiable in a democratic society', which is wording contained in section 38(1). It considered that the circumstances in

which the prohibition had occurred had an element of unfairness in them because the applicants had taken all necessary steps to prepare to commence broadcasting. In these circumstances, the court decided that 'this law is not reasonably justifiable in a democratic society'. Therefore the law was void.

While the decision of the court was unanimous, the judgment of Kapi DCJ leaned toward finding that the provision did not comply with the substantive requirements of section 38(1), whereas the decision of Barnett J indicated support for the substance of the legislation but also concluded that it was void due to the failure to satisfy the formal requirements of section 38(2).

¹ Federated States of Micronesia, Constitution, Article IV, section 1.

² Edward C. King, 'Custom and Constitutionalism in the Federated States of Micronesia', *Asian-Pacific Law and Policy Journal*; Vol. 3, Issue 2 (Summer 2002), 249–81, 255.

³ In relation to the concept of 'prior restraint' see Part II, principle 3, below.

⁴ *Alan Fisher Taione and others v The Kingdom of Tonga* No. CV374/2004.

⁵ Article 2, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. [roman?]

⁶ Based on Article 19, *Statement on the Right to Communicate* (London, February 2003) 2.

⁷ Committee of Ministers, Declaration on the Freedom of Expression and Information, 29 April 1982, reprinted in Council of Europe DH-MM (91)1.

⁸ Adopted at the UNESCO/MISA-sponsored conference, Ten Years On: Assessment, Challenges and Prospects.

⁹ *Annual Report of the UN Human Rights Committee*, 21 September 1997, UN Doc. A/52/40.

¹⁰ *Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur to the UN Commission on Human Rights*, 29 January 1999, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1999/64. See also *Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur to the UN Commission on Human Rights*, 28 January 1998, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1998/40, para. 20, where the Special Rapporteur noted the need for independent regulatory frameworks for private broadcasters.

¹¹ A comprehensive statement of the principles of freedom of expression in the context of broadcast is contained in the Article 19 publication, *Access to the Airwaves: Principles on Freedom of Expression and Broadcast Regulation* (March 2002), available at www.article19.org/docimages/1289.htm.

¹² *Future Media Legislation and Regulation for the Republic of the Fiji Islands* (1996) Cardiff: Thomson Foundation.

¹³ In a number of cases the relevant minister is the Prime Minister (Nauru, Niue, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu).

¹⁴ United Nations Special Rapporteur, 1998 Report.

¹⁵ http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/programs/ai/rti/international/intl_standards.htm

¹⁶ Examples provided are from India, Belize and South Africa, Open Sesame: Looking for the Right to Information in the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative 2003 Report, p 36.

¹⁷ Dalgety J in *Kingdom of Tonga v Pohiva* at 44, quoting Blackstone.

¹⁸ *Hector v Attorney General of Antigua and Barbuda* [1990] 2 WLR 606, 608.

¹⁹ *Attorney-General v BBC* [1980] 3 All ER 161, 183.

²⁰ Quoting from Lord Millett in *Pinder v The Queen* [2003] AC 620, 628-631 (PC).

²¹ *Alan Fisher Taione and others v The Kingdom of Tonga* No. CV374/2004, p 19.

²² Authority for this position: *T & T Newspaper Publishing Group Limited v Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago* [1990], p. 30.

²³ Section 1, Article 10, *European Convention on Human Rights*, partially quoted in *R v Central Independent Television plc* [1994] 3 All ER 641, 651-2 (CA).

²⁴ As noted in Part I, the PNG Constitution specifically incorporates the provisions of this Convention and other human rights documents.

²⁵ The reference to the 'commission of an offence' was believed to have been a drafting mistake and should have read the incitement of an offence.

²⁶ *Alan Fisher Taione and others v The Kingdom of Tonga* No. CV374/2004, p 35.

²⁷ *Alan Fisher Taione and others v The Kingdom of Tonga* No. CV374/2004, p 35.

²⁸ *Alan Fisher Taione and others v The Kingdom of Tonga* No. CV374/2004, p 38.

²⁹ *Alan Fisher Taione and others v The Kingdom of Tonga* No. CV374/2004, p 41.

³⁰ *Efi v Attorney-General of Samoa* [2000] WSSC 22 (1 August 2000).

³¹ *Martin v City of Struthers* (1942) 319 US 141, 146; *Re Romesh Thapper v State of Madras* (1950) 37 AIR (SCR) 124, 127.

³² *Belize Broadcasting Authority v Courtenay and Hoare* (1990) 38 WIR 79, 88–89.

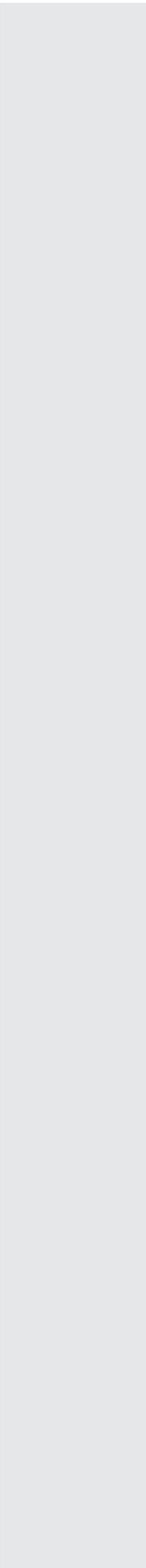
³³ *Hector v Attorney General of Antigua and Barbuda* (1990) 2 All ER 103, 106.

³⁴ *Australian Capital Television Pty Ltd v Commonwealth* (1992) 177 CLR 106, 138.

³⁵ *Efi v Attorney-General of Samoa* [2000] WSSC 22 (1 August 2000).

³⁶ *The State v NTN Pty Ltd and NBN Ltd* [1987] PGLAWREP 9; [1992] PNGLR 1 (7 April 1987).

³⁷ *The State v NTN Pty Ltd and NBN Ltd* [1987] PGLAWREP 9; [1992] PNGLR 1 (7 April 1987).



PACIFIC NEWS CONTENT ANALYSIS

BACKGROUND

This news content analysis provides an insight into the governance news priorities and journalism practices that impact on the standard of governance coverage in different Pacific countries. Data for the content analysis was collected from major media across 13 Pacific Island countries for a three-week period, 2–21 August 2004. These dates were chosen as they included the regional Pacific Islands Forum meeting — a period of potentially more intense regional and national coverage — along with two ‘normal’ news weeks either side of the Forum.

1. PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

The countries included in the study are: the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

2. GOVERNANCE NEWS CATEGORIES

The June 2004 SANA Reference Group Workshop developed a list of governance news categories for the analysis, and these were further developed following the workshop by the USP journalism department and the SANA Coordinator. The categories are:

- Political governance
- Economic governance
- Natural resources
- Development and community
- Law, conflict and security
- Human rights

The other major areas of analysis were:

- The main source of the report, as identified in the story (government, private/corporate, NGO, community representative, private individual, local media, regional media, international media, none of these and source unknown);
- Whether the story had a single or multiple sources;
- Whether the story was accredited (byline or not);
- Whether the story was a lead story or not.

The main limitation of the governance categories listed above and sub-categories is that each carries the same weighting. That is, the coding process does not distinguish between a primary category and a secondary one. Therefore a story that was about economic governance, with a secondary theme of health, would not be identified in this way. The number of governance

categories also exceeds the total number of stories, because the story may fit more than one governance category.

3. NEWS CONTENT

The news collected included:

- Transcripts of the main evening bulletin from public service and commercial radio stations (Monday to Saturday).
- Transcripts of the main evening bulletin from national free-to-air television stations (Monday to Saturday).
- Daily newspapers (Monday to Saturday) and weekly newspapers. Monthly newspapers and magazines were not included.
- PACNEWS regional news, Monday to Saturday. PINA Nius Online was not included, based on advice that it would be shortly merging with PACNEWS.

A total of 3496 stories were collected and analysed, with the largest number coming from Fiji and PNG.

4. LANGUAGE

The news stories were mainly in English. However, if there was a local language version that was not a translation of the English version, this was also sought and translated where feasible.

5. NEWS COLLECTION

The PINA Secretariat contacted its members with a request that they contribute to the content analysis. The PINA Secretariat then collected available news, and the Secretariat, along with the SANA Coordinator and USP followed up other news organisations. Issues that arose during the collection period included the following:

- A number of news organisations were not able to send news electronically.
- Some of the public service broadcasting stations in small to medium sized countries did not archive their news systematically and/or could only send some of the news for the period. Other stations, such as the government radio stations in FSM, Palau and RMI, could not provide any news. Private newspapers in Palau and RMI were included, as well as some government news sent to the government radio stations in FSM.
- Some public service radio news was not dated, nor was the beginning or end of the bulletin clear from the order of the material sent.
- The online news versions of newspapers and/or radio bulletins can be briefer, and in a different order to the hard copy newspaper and broadcast radio bulletin. In these instances, the hard copy and/or on-air bulletin was preferred, if available.
- Some newspapers were accessible only in hard copy format, but the copies were not always readily available.
- There is no news from Nauru because the Nauru Media Bureau was producing little news during this period due to cost cutting, and no transcripts were kept of the small amount of news that was produced.

The content analysis does not include audio inserts (radio) or vision from television bulletins, as a number of the news organisations involved did not have the capacity to send this electronically. This level of analysis, while valuable, was also not feasible given the deadline for the content analysis and the budget.

6.

ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Government sources

The study reveals a considerable reliance on government sources across all media. Further research would need to be done to determine:

- the government media processes that lend to this;
- whether the stories were verbatim press releases, rewritten press releases, and/or press releases used only as background information for interviews;
- what the correlation was between government stories and single sources and how that compared with stories from the other sources listed;
- what government sources feature in these stories, and why.

Single and multiple sources

The coding combination of single source with government source was very prevalent across all publications. However, the data can also reflect a number of sources within a given source category. Generally, where this occurred the multiple sources were only from the government source category.

Single and multiple sourcing was a measure of the extent to which balance is achieved in any given news item. It remains a strong determinant of the journalist's ability to access on-the-record material as a right of reply to the primary source. With this in mind, given the three-week period of the analysis, this study was not able to detect balance over time, or balance achieved across a number of editions or bulletins.

Bylines and no bylines

The lack of accreditation or attribution (sourcing) for key facts central to a story's news angle was identified across all publications as a factor.¹ Bylines are an indication of a newsroom's policy of assigning and accrediting stories to individual reporters. It may over time reflect specialisation by these reporters. However, newsroom policies are not uniform, which is important to recognise when interpreting this aspect of the data.

However, two basic assumptions are broadly valid:

- A story without a byline is more likely to be a rewritten or reproduced media release than one with a byline;
- A story that contains a byline may still be a rewritten or reproduced media release with minimal changes to the original release.

Regional and overseas sources

If stories came from other news outlets, the research can only detect the external source if it was explicitly stated, such as 'Radio Australia reports'. If the story was largely 'lifted' from another source and published or broadcast unchanged without accreditation, then the original regional and/or overseas source was difficult to identify. Even where the source was accredited, it was not possible to determine from this analysis whether the report was published or broadcast unchanged, and/or what changes were made.

There is a general tendency for competitive publications in the Pacific not to credit each other's stories. These are hard to identify through a content analysis alone and require analysis of editorial practices and routines to reveal the extent of unaccredited republication, which can give the misleading impression of an independently researched story.

7.

REGIONAL AND COUNTRY FINDINGS SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the tables for the region and for each country, included in Appendix F.

Regional analysis

- More than twice as many print news stories were coded than broadcast news. This may reflect accessibility of print news as much as the volume of stories produced.

- 67 per cent of stories were single source as against multiple source. The breakdown of single-source stories between media categories does not appear significant.
- 63 per cent of stories were sourced to government, more than three times greater than the next most prevalent source category 'private/corporate'. Again the breakdown between media categories does not appear significant.

Country	Percentage attributed to single source	Percentage sourced to government
Cook Islands	59	72
FSM*	80	100
Fiji Islands	61	61
Kiribati*	85	27
Nauru**	0	0
Niue*	38	52
Palau	63	77
PNG	91	71
RMI*	67	52
Samoa	28	74
Solomon Islands	65	57
Tonga	54	41
Tuvalu*	64	50
Vanuatu	77	65

* Low story count from these countries

** As noted, the Nauru Media Bureau was not able to supply news during the survey period.

8. OTHER RESEARCH CONSIDERATIONS

Some news practices were outside the scope of this content analysis and would require separate analysis. For example, a story may appear to present a valid news angle, but the promotional agenda of the source can come to dominate the story. This can reveal a lack of skill on the part of the journalist both in the choice of story and in the handling of sources (people promoting their own agenda). Such cases were most likely to occur in single-source stories attributed to government, corporate, NGO and community representative sources.

Another example is an analysis or round-up used in radio voice reports. The journalist can fail to attribute the information, which may or may not have been thoroughly researched and checked. Again, knowledge of the editorial and production guidelines as well as writing conventions could throw light on whether journalists are given sufficient time and have sufficient skill to package news items as analytical summaries of events, court cases and so on.

Related to this is news dominated by the interpretation or opinions of journalists to the exclusion of actual sources — sources who themselves are meant to be the subject of the story. This was more prevalent in radio voice reports (the reporter was very often not an eyewitness to an event) and read-only television news items, but less common in print news. Such stories often left key sources voiceless, relied on journalistic interpretation that was not transparently written, and presented 'analysis' that was not necessarily credibly researched or presented. They generally contained few, if any, quotes.

Another issue relevant to the quality of a news service but outside this study is news writing skills and the extent to which they have been mastered in English. It would be useful to gather information on the following:

- How does a media organisation see its English-language news service as compared to its vernacular ones?
- What data or other forms of knowledge do news organisations have on the English literacy levels and vernacular literacy levels of their audiences?

Given that most of the content analysis covers English-language news:

- Are the findings likely to be consistent with an analysis of non-English news?
- And what are the determining factors vis-à-vis media literacy?

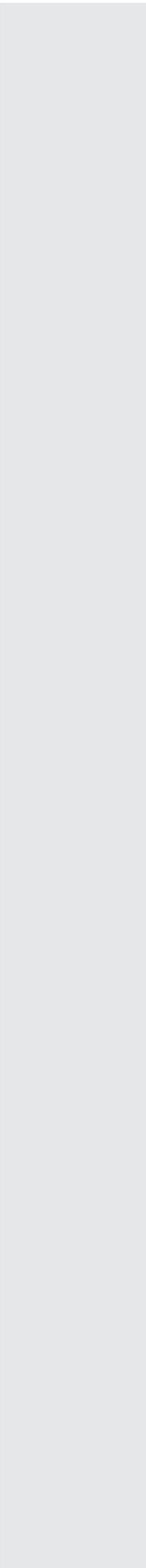
These are important questions, not least because the data contains very wide variations in the standards of English expression.

9.

FURTHER RESEARCH

- Further research is needed on stories coded single –source and government source with a cross-section of in-country media to ascertain the extent to which news outlets rely on government releases for their news. A related issue is the extent to which these stories are given prominence as lead stories within the editorial priorities of each publication or broadcast bulletin.
- The cluster of single-source stories without byline should be examined as a whole to reveal the extent to which the news media provide an outlet for public relations material from government, non-government and private sources with minimal editorial intervention.
- A separate analysis should be conducted of those stories acknowledging an external source, such as local media, regional media and international media, to ascertain the extent to which the original story was relied on (for example, in its entirety or developed by adding content and context to the original story). This could be enhanced by data from the newsrooms about editorial policy and approaches to competitors' stories and those from outside the country or region.
- As mentioned, the analysis could not measure balance over time, but the content analysis provides the raw material to further investigate story continuity — that is, the extent to which reporters follow up important leads and pursue issues over time. A number of areas could serve as case studies, such as crime, public sector reform and HIV/AIDS. Research could be tailored to identify continuity or lack of it in specified news trends.
- Consideration could also be given to a separate study (cross-country comparison) on the choice of language and writing conventions adopted by the region's media and the broad implications for journalism training.
- Research to determine the technical capacity to store and retrieve archival news content on a country-by-country basis.

¹ For radio and television stories, bylines were attributed when the journalist who had prepared the report was identified.



COOK ISLANDS

BACKGROUND

The country consists of 15 widely dispersed islands, 12 of which are inhabited. The Southern Group of islands comprises Rarotonga (where the capital, Avarua, is located), Aitutaki, Atiu, Manga Mauke, Mitiaro, Palmerston and Takutea, most of which are high volcanic formations. The Northern Group comprises Manikiki, Nassau, Penhyn, Pukapuka and Rakahana; all except Nassau are low-lying coral atolls.

The country has experienced a significant decline in its population since 1996, with large numbers of Cook Islanders migrating to New Zealand, Australia and other countries in search of better employment opportunities. The total resident population has declined from 18,034 in 1996 to 13,400 in 2004, with most of the population residing on Rarotonga. The majority of the indigenous population are Maori, a people with ancient language and cultural links to fellow populations in Aotearoa (New Zealand), Tahiti, Hawaii and Rapa Nui, with common origins in Samoa.

The Cook Islands is a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand, an arrangement dating from August 1965. Under the terms of free association with New Zealand, Cook Islanders hold New Zealand citizenship, and enjoy rights of free access to New Zealand. Parliament consists of 24 elected members, with a Speaker usually appointed from outside elected members. Parliamentarians are elected every five years by universal suffrage. In each of the outer islands, the Island Council is the statutorily established governing body. Traditional leaders, including *ariki* (chiefs), maintain considerable influence and control large areas of communal land in traditional ownership.¹

The survey was conducted in the Cook Islands from late August to November 2005.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Prime Minister is responsible for broadcasting, telecommunications and information technology portfolios.

The only legislation relating to operation and licensing of radio and television is the *Cook Islands Broadcasting Corporation Act 1989*, updated in 1997, and this is currently being reviewed.

There have been no new broadcasting licences issued since Cook Islands Television was established in 1989 and Aitutaki Television shortly after that.

There is no newspaper licensing. Newspapers only require business licences.

Cook Islands telecommunications are governed under the *Telecommunications Act 1989* amended by the *Telecommunications Act 1992*. The Act is specifically tailored for Telecom Cook Islands Limited as the sole provider of telecommunications services. It protects the company by prohibiting any other person from operating a telecommunications network in the Cook Islands. The company is given powers under the Act to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of its services. The Act also provides for the regulation of radio communications, including the licensing of radio operators.²

1.2

Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

The Cooks Islands Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and expression (section 64). It does not include a specific guarantee for freedom of the press, or the right to government information. In March 2005 a draft Cook Islands Official Information Bill was completed, and will be submitted to Cabinet. The Cook Islands Broadcasting Corporation (CIBC) Board commissioned a local lawyer to draw up the legislation, put together the report and circulate it for public comment. The Bill is modelled on New Zealand legislation. The Chairperson of the CIBC Board said, 'If government is really committed to delivering good governance, then this Bill should get full support and progress through Parliament quickly with the support of the opposition.' He added that the proposed Bill:

Would make a difference in Pacific island countries in that a disclosure regime would do away with rumour-mongering and the culture of government secrecy. To build a better society, governments have to be open with official information and realise that information belongs to the people, not the administrations.³

The proposed bill is said to limit access to official documents that would have an adverse effect on national security; defence; international relations; situations relating to public safety; prevention, investigation and prosecution of criminal activities; privacy and other legitimate interests; and monetary and exchange rate policies of the state.⁴

1.3

Media regulation

In 1989 the Cook Islands Government introduced the *Broadcasting Act*. This Act established national public service radio and television to be operated by the CIBC, and included the provision of broadcasting licences (commercial and community) and a Programme Advisory Committee. The main function of the Committee was to advise the CIBC and other licensees on the nature, diversity and suitability of programming, including amounts of time for local content, advertising, cultural, educational, informational and religious programs, and news, documentaries and current affairs.

In 1996 the government privatised the CIBC stations — Cooks Islands Radio and Cook Islands Television — as part of a range of cost-cutting measures to improve the economy. This meant that that there was no longer a national public service broadcaster. Elijah Communications, which is part of the Pitt Media Group, now operates both media outlets.

In 2004 the government established an interim CIBC Board (referred to above) to review the existing media situation in the Cook Islands and make recommendations for how to move forward.⁵ The Board members consist of a mix of Opposition and Government Members of Parliament and a private sector representative. The Cook Islands National Broadcasting Corporation (CINBC) was also established to develop a national public radio service.

These actions were in response to government concerns about some media content and ethics. A government spokesperson said:

The country is being treated like a prison where threats are regularly made in the media and personal attacks are mounted on a select few. It appears to be a regular routine. What this country needs is proper broadcasting standards ... The result of the misuse of the country's broadcasting services is a society that is constantly under tension generated by the electronic media. There have also been complaints about obscenity, violence and sexual activities on television ... The Broadcasting Act makes it quite clear that broadcasting services in the Cook Islands ought to have social responsibility and take government policies into account.⁶

As part of its review of the industry, the government consulted the New Zealand Broadcasting Standards Authority about changes to the existing broadcasting legislation. The Authority has since produced the draft Cook Islands Media Bill 2004. The draft Bill includes the establishment of a Media Commission to advise on media policy and development, and issue codes of practice for all media (print, radio and television), advertising and the internet.

Two other bodies would be established as part of the Media Commission: the Broadcasting Licensing Authority and the Media Standards Council.

The Broadcasting Licensing Authority would issue radio and television licences for a period of five years. In addition to technical information, the applicant would have to inform the Authority about what local content it intended to transmit. The Authority would then impose conditions on the licensee based on this information. The licensee is able to apply to the Authority at any time to have these conditions varied. The Authority would also be empowered to hear complaints that the licensee is not meeting their licence conditions.

The Media Standards Council would consist of three members of the Media Commission. The Council would receive and determine complaints from people about broadcasting, print media, advertising and internet content. In the first instance, public complaints would be directed to the media organisation concerned and be addressed by the Council only if the complainant is dissatisfied with the organisation's response. Concerns have been expressed that the proposed legislation gives the government power to appoint the members of the Council rather than establishing an independent body like the recently reinstated but non-statutory National Development Council.

The Programme Advisory Committee would act as a committee under the Media Commission and issue a set of program guidelines. Such a committee exists under the *Cook Islands Broadcasting Corporation Act*, but the exact role that it has played over the last decade is unclear as, reportedly, no program guidelines have been issued.⁷

1.4 Defamation

The *Defamation Act 1993* states that:

Libel and slander [are] actionable without proof of special damage; and that in an action for slander of title, slander of goods, or other malicious falsehood, it shall not be necessary to allege or prove special damage if the words upon which the action is founded are calculated to cause pecuniary damage to the plaintiff; and unintentional defamation [where] a person who has published words alleged to be defamatory of another person may, if he claims that the words were published by him innocently in relation to that other person, make an offer of amends under this section.

Defamation has been an issue in the Cook Islands and this is discussed in more detail in Section 2.16, Code of Ethics for Journalists. Accusations of libel have not just involved government and the media, with one case seeing one media organisation taking action against another.⁸

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are currently no specific local content requirements for television or radio. The proposed codes of media practice in the Media Bill contain detailed content guidelines relating to public morality, decency, privacy, the right to correction, and the need for accuracy and balance. There is a reference in this Bill, as noted, to a requirement that licence applicants advise on local content, but no quotas are suggested.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

As mentioned above, the government has plans to reintroduce public service radio broadcasting, establishing the CINBC and appointing a General Manager. The following is the proposed charter for the Corporation:

CINBC Corporate Goals

- *It is intended that the establishment of an independently managed state-owned radio station shall operate under the new Media Standards [yet to be legislated], Media Act 2004 and Code of Practice.*
- *The Board is determined that the independent public broadcaster, free from political influence shall deliver:*
 - *Fairness, impartiality and balance in all programmes, series of programmes, or in broadly released programmes when dealing with political matters, current affairs and public controversy.*
 - *Reporting will be guided at all times by accuracy, fairness and balance and should not deliberately mislead or misinform the listening audience by commission, or omission.*
 - *Provide programmes specifically designed to keep the outer islands abreast of up to date events, social services awareness programmes and daily news and information bulletins.*
 - *Promote the Cook Islands culture through broadcast of the Cook Islands language, music and legends.*
 - *Unite the scattered and isolated islands of the group.*
 - *Stimulate audience participation and public expression of opinion through well-researched, balanced talkback sessions.*
 - *The national broadcaster shall provide trusted and reliable voice for the Cook Islands people.*

- *It is further intended that the state-owned radio station shall be managed and shall operate under the same guidelines as those which apply to credible organisations such as the BBC, ABC and NZ Broadcasting, according to statements from the acting general manager of the station and the interim Cook Islands Broadcasting Corporation board review committee.*⁹

Elijah Communications has spoken out against the CINBC initiative because it believes the new broadcaster would compete with Radio Cook Islands, the private radio service it operates. Elijah promotes the station as a national service. However, government says most outer islands cannot pick up signals from Radio Cook Islands. Elijah has acknowledged there has been an aid project on hold for over a decade to create a satellite-based FM network to boost signal strength to the outer islands.¹⁰

The government has described the proposed national radio service as ‘an essential public service, not a business’ and said it will broadcast educational programs for communities and schools, health programs, children’s stories, music and cultural programs, talkback radio, weather bulletins, shipping and aviation news, business news, current affairs, hourly international news, national news and regional magazine programs.¹¹

The CINBC proposal is in response to government concerns about the limitations of the current Cooks Islands Radio content and service (lack of diverse viewpoints and programs, and limited reach). Government is currently considering whether the legislation for the CINBC station will be part of the Cook Islands Media Bill or be stand-alone legislation.

1.7 Government funding for media

Under the Prime Minister’s office expenditure, there is an allocation for the CIBC Board of NZ\$70,000 (approximately AU\$65,283).¹² That consists of NZ\$38,000 for personnel and NZ\$32,000 for operating costs. An amount of US\$30,000 (NZ\$44,648) has been allocated for the CINBC, with further funding being sought from donors.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

There are two major media groups in the Cook Islands — Cook Islands News Ltd, which operates the main daily newspaper and an online service, and the Pitt Media Group (PMG). This is the trading name for a variety of media organisations working mainly through one registered company, Elijah Communications Ltd, locally owned by the Pitt family. PMG operates the national radio and television stations, as well as three weekly newspapers and online news services.

Radio

- Radio Cook Islands is operated by Elijah Communications, part of the PMG.
- KC FM is the country’s only commercial FM radio station, and was the first FM music station in the Pacific when started in 1979. Its licence stated that it could not broadcast political content. KC FM has a very limited audience, restricted to the capital due to loss of a transmission mast some years back. The format is all music, with a small amount of advertising. There is no local news.
- Radio Enea Manu is a community FM student radio operated by Atiu College, Atiu. It is funded as part of school activities from school fees, parents, radiothons and very limited advertising.

Newspapers

- Cook Islands News Ltd produces the daily newspaper *Cook Islands News (CIN)*, which is published daily except Sundays. The three shareholders are Wendy and Phil Evans and Lawrence Bailey. *CIN* estimates it sells up to 2000 copies of the newspaper in Rarotonga. *CIN* is also available online at <http://www.cinews.co.ck/>
- *Cook Islands Herald*, weekly (up to 1600 copies per edition), operated by PMG. *Cook Islands Independent*, weekly (up to 1000 copies per edition), operated by PMG.
- *Cook Islands Times*, weekly (up to 1000 copies per edition), operated by PMG. Ninety-five per cent of the news in each of the PMG papers is available online at <http://www.ciherald.co.ck/>
- PMG also used to operate the *Cook Islands Press* (the same name as another former weekly) but this appears to have been discontinued sometime in 2003.

- There is also a small range of tourism publications produced by three different companies in Rarotonga and a much wider range of tourism websites. None produce governance information.

Television

- Cook Islands Television (CITV) is operated by Elijah Communications, part of the PMG.
- Aitutaki Television Ltd is a commercial station privately owned by Mike Henry and Junior Maoate, Cook Islanders with extensive tourism interests on the atoll. It is funded through advertising sales, telethons and commercial sponsorship.
- There are seven community television stations on the outer islands of Mangaia, Mauke, Mitiaro, Atiu, Manihiki, Pukapuka and Tongareva. They are owned by the Island Council on each island. A mixture of public servants and volunteers staff the stations. They are funded by a household broadcasting fee, payable annually, and community notice fees.

Media outlets surveyed

The SANA survey in the Cook Islands focused on the mainstream, national media that produce media governance content (local news and information), and was unable to survey the media governance capacity of the community stations in the outer islands.

2.2 Radio and television program format

Radio Cook Islands broadcasts local news (supplied by the government media office) and international news, music, community messages, talkback and a small number of programs on areas such as health awareness.

Radio Enea Manu has talkback programs, community affairs, music and school news.

CITV broadcasts entertainment, religious programs and local and international news from 5 pm to 11 pm, and ABC Asia Pacific programs from 11 pm to 9 am. CITV has about an hour a day of local production.

Aitutaki Television's format varies. It used to rebroadcast the ABC's Asia Pacific signal all day, but there is now some local content, mainly news and cultural tapes sent from Rarotonga. Aitutaki events are broadcast occasionally.

The community television stations on Mangaia, Mauke, Mitiaro, Atiu, Manihiki, Pukapuka and Tongareva generally feature whatever content is available, such as news and cultural videos from Rarotonga, local events, and pirated copies of movies and television programs from New Zealand and Australia.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

CIN described itself as a national newspaper and a community newspaper. It publishes stories 'from government, from the private sector, but it is a community newspaper'. The Governing Director added, 'Probably in terms of government reporting, and things like that, it's not pro-government. It aims to be down the middle.' According to the Editor, most news is local, as 'visiting the outer islands is time consuming and expensive and we don't have the manpower'.

The *Cook Islands Herald*, *Cook Islands Independent* and *Cook Islands Times* originally aimed to focus on three different areas — politics, business and community, respectively. However, the Managing Editor of PMG, with responsibility for the three weekly papers, said that the focus of the papers is shaped by available events. As a result, the newspapers all combine information and entertainment, mostly on daily events, community activities and political issues. 'So it's really an all-round approach to news gathering or news reporting. You couldn't call it a newspaper that is focused on certain content or subject matter. The areas are pretty broad and ... community [based] because of the smallness of the country.' The Managing Editor added that, as the newspapers are produced on Rarotonga, 99 per cent of the content came from the main island.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

CIN targets everyone from school children upwards. It is estimated that most of the readers would be 20 years and over as there is little content to attract a younger audience. *CIN* is distributed primarily in Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Mangaia and Atiu. Some copies are also distributed to Manihiki and the northern group:

The places that have got airports we send bundles to the schools there. So most of the outer islands that have got airports. But in terms of sales, there are no northern group ones. We did try and send some to Manihiki, but they never got paid for so we stopped. There is a problem with the outer islands. They are very keen to have the papers but they are not so keen to pay for them. At the moment, the shops in Aitutaki and the ones in Mangaia and Atiu. Manihiki has been a problem in the past. (Governing Director)

Nassau, Palmerston and Rakahanga are not serviced due to extreme isolation.

CIN receives informal feedback from its readers. The Governing Director said:

You get letters, or phone calls, saying why don't you do this? And it's usually about a particular story. About why don't we cut all the political stuff? Because it's boring. People hate politicians. Don't want to hear about them. But we don't take much notice of that. We try to hit all sides. And we actually do, judging by letters to the editor, things like that.

The *Cook Islands Herald*, *Cook Islands Independent*, and the *Cook Islands Times* also target everyone:

I've been to discussions and you talk about technical stuff like circulation, who is your target audience and what sort of surveys have you done. But to a large degree you can't do that here because you are trying to reach everybody. Small community right? You can't just say 'we'll focus on these people'; you want to grab everybody so you can take that general appeal and sell it to advertisers. Otherwise you are saying to advertisers, sorry we are only writing for a small group of people. (Managing Editor, PMG)

Currently the PMG newspapers are sent to Manihiki and Aitutaki. The distribution is dependent on demand. The *Cook Islands Herald* used to have a dedicated section for Aitutaki but this finished when the journalist returned from the island for personal reasons. Most shops on Aitutaki no longer carry the newspaper because they reportedly either do not like the sometimes hard-hitting style or because it only carries news about Rarotonga. This latter complaint is also made against CIN but there are fewer complaints about its style.

Rarotonga shopkeepers reported that the *Herald* has enjoyed a strong following among the youth because of its weekly giveaways of toys, cash and other youth-oriented items. However, PMG no longer promotes winners and it is unclear whether support remains as strong.

PMG puts 95 per cent of the news from its newspapers on its website. The target is Cook Islanders and others living overseas, and the service is free of charge.

CIN online is provided free as a service to Cook Islanders and others overseas who are interested in the country, but it is not intended to take the place of the hardcopy CIN.

Radio Cook Islands said 'everyone' is its target audience. Programs reflect this, ranging from Teen Scene in the afternoon for an hour, to church programs on Sunday morning, talkback two to four times a week during working hours and a few awareness programs. The station promotes itself as the 'voice of the nation' but in reality cannot be picked up reliably beyond Rarotonga. Reception to the closest outer islands depends on the weather and it does not reach the northern group at all. Radio Cook Islands does have a website but this is not updated.

Radio Enea Manu targets the 200 or so youth on Atiu, but other age groups also tune into the broadcasts. Its broadcasts only reach those on the island.

CITV targets everyone on Rarotonga. It is reported that some people do not watch all or parts of the broadcasts due to perceptions of low quality. CITV described its television content as educational because it informed people (young to old) about what was happening in the world. The station can only be received in Rarotonga and transmission is patchy in parts.

Aitutaki Television also targets everyone, although the researcher notes that this might be doubtful, as island youth may not find the ABC's Asia Pacific current affairs and documentaries appealing. However, in the absence of broader media services, there is apparently wide acceptance of all offerings, whether it is a months-old women's magazine or decades-old documentaries on World War II. The station signal is only received in Aitutaki.

Mangaia, Mauke, Mitiaro, Atiu, Manihiki, Pukapuka and Tongareva community television stations have broad appeal, depending on specific content. On islands of as little as 300 people, television is for everyone. A police officer from Rarotonga used the Atiu FM radio station extensively in 2003 to introduce and promote the concept of stricter traffic and other law enforcement standards. He hosted talkback sessions to listen to island problems and report progress on law enforcement,

and attributed a major part of the success of his campaign to the television talkback sessions. The officer said, 'It was good because they could ask me questions over the phone and then watch my reaction on the TV. It was a way of getting to know me and what I thought.'¹³

Atiu and Mitiaro are close enough to pick up each other's signal, and Mitiaro frequently rebroadcasts Atiu's signal on its off-nights (three a week). Other islands are too widely scattered to do the same, apart from Rakahanga, 43 km from Manihiki, but it has been too small to attract funding for television.

Like Aitutaki Television, outer islands community stations receive sporadic updates from CITV Rarotonga. In the past this has depended on:

- Current relations between the PMG and government;
- Whether or not government is funding or sponsoring production of news and other videotapes to the islands;
- Funding availability in the national budget, which provides general funding for Island Councils including the council-owned television stations.

The community television stations often operate as defacto radio broadcasters, with outer islanders leaving television sets on to receive a station logo, music, news and other voiceovers.

The operation of the stations also depends on how the voluntary staff feel that night, and whether they want to watch news from Rarotonga or the latest action movie. On remote islands where shortages are frequent due to shipping delays and rough weather (which stops lighters from offloading cargo or even getting through reef passages) programming inconsistency is not a major issue.

2.5 Audience research

A visiting American researcher surveyed the television audience of what was then public service television (now privatised CITV) from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. This was the last television survey of its type. Currently CITV receives a lot of informal feedback by telephone from viewers.

None of the other media organisations have conducted audience surveys. The PMG Managing Editor summed up why when he said:

We don't do any for radio, TV or newspaper due to a combination of factors (no time, no money, capacity, not interested) ... it is not a priority. We kind of get a general feeling for what we've got to do to deliver what people want, and what may not work, and what will definitely not work.

2.6 NGO and government access

Generally NGOs and government departments have to pay to have advertisements published in *CIN*. The *CIN* Governing Director said that NGOs and government departments do not need to pay for news stories; however, *CIN*'s experience is that contributions are irregular:

If NGOs want to send stuff in, often it needs editing because of the way it is written. An NGO could run a column, we'd be very happy about it, but the other thing with NGOs is they say, 'Oh let's run a weekly thing,' and we'll maybe get the first one in and that's it. We used to do a health one. Now there is no longer a column. They can't get their message across to the public. But we'd be happy to have it back.

CIN's Editor also referred to the lack of relevance of some NGO press releases:

Nine times out of ten [CIN] did not use the material sent by NGOs because what's sent is from their parent organisation. Or the organisation they are affiliated with sent the release to them saying 'send this to your local newspaper', stuff that is sent in is aimed at the international market. They probably don't see it as their job to rewrite it.

CIN's Editor said the only NGO to make regular contact is the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation, and with government it is mainly the ministries of Environment and Health.

NGOs and government departments must purchase airtime for advertisements, talkback programs and newspaper columns in PMG media (newspapers, Radio Cook Islands and CITV).

However, one of CITV's news aims is to cover NGO activities on a regular basis, and this is free of charge. According to CITV's News Director:

We try and do as many community stories because we have a lot of NGOs as well. If we feel we haven't rung Punanga Tauturu (Cook Islands Women's Counselling Service) for a while, we'll ring them. We'll make an effort to put an NGO on.

2.7

Journalism resources

CIN has five journalists, including the Editor. Experience ranges from seven and five years, to two years and just four months. The CIN Editor said cadets do not require a specific level of education. The Editor has a Pacific Islands Journalism Certificate from the Manukau Polytechnic in Auckland, New Zealand. CIN salaries for journalists are NZ\$12,000 (cadets) to NZ\$20,000 (experienced journalists).

CITV has three journalists, and students often intern at the station, along with guest and celebrity presenters like Miss Cook Islands and sports stars. One journalist has been working at CITV for seven years, another for six years, and the third for four years.¹⁴ The News Director has a degree in education and English from USP. CITV's salary range for journalists is NZ\$12,000–20,000 with incentives.

PMG has an average of two or three journalists who work on all three newspapers. The journalists have a range of experience from one to two years to more than ten years for the Editor. PMG's minimum level of education for a cadet is Form 5, and the ability to write in English. The Editor has a Pacific Islands Journalism Certificate from the Manukau Polytechnic in Auckland, New Zealand, as well as a degree in political studies from La Trobe University, Melbourne. PMG said cadets receive NZ\$10,000 per annum (NZ\$200 per week) with more experienced journalists receiving NZ\$15,000 per annum (NZ\$300 per week).

PMG's Managing Editor described two of the journalists as investigative journalists: 'That's just part and parcel of doing anything.' CIN had no investigative journalists at the time of the survey and CITV's News Director referred to the difficulty with this form of journalism in a small country:

Investigative stories have to have somebody talking on camera. Being a small island there's nobody willing to put their foot out you know and say this is what's happening. That's hard. But if we're doing something along the lines of investigative journalism we'll hold it until we can get something out and then build on it.

Journalists say they leave for salary and personal reasons as well as a lack of training and any formal career path development. PMG also referred to the problem of not having a number of experienced journalists to call on when staff leave. At times PMG has had to recruit print journalists from overseas to fill temporary gaps.

Equipment resources

At CIN each of the journalists has their own computer with access to the internet. This is an improvement from just two years ago when journalists were still writing on faded green and black DOS screens in a program called Framework IV. Back then only the management team had access to the internet, and journalists had to write down emails or web search terms and leave them on the desk for a manager. Now journalists can email and search the web from their own desks.

CITV has computers for editing, digital cameras and DVD decks. The journalists do not have email access on their computers:

The guys [who monitor the company email link watchus@citv.co.ck] here will come and say I have something or they will deliver things. Or if we need to look at a website we'll just say can you just pull this up and then they'll print it. (News Director)

The CITV News Director said the lack of email was not an obstacle to news gathering because content is 'community-based'. 'I think if we had [more coverage] in the outer islands then it might be a problem.' She also said that there is no problem in terms of transport, cameras or computers and that the equipment is adequate:

Equipment is pretty good right now. At the moment we are at the best that we've ever been. We've learnt how to film ourselves, do everything on our own so we don't have that limitation that we used to have [relying on a crew]. And we've reached the stage where we go somewhere, find somebody, you do an interview now in just two minutes and you can make a story out of it. When equipment does matter is when our cameras have to go in for maintenance, that kind of stuff.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

PMG said it does not have the resources to produce local news on Radio Cook Islands, and approached the Government Information Unit (GovMedia) to do this for the station:

It was a way of having a bulletin and saving us doing it. It has its drawbacks because it is obviously just government slanted news, so is that good or not? Yes in some ways, no in other ways, but what do you do? You try and screen some of it, so if we see stuff coming over that is politicking or is anti-us or whatever, we say, forget about this one.

Apart from freeing us up? It's helping community with some understanding of what government is doing in some way ... I don't think it paints an overly rosy picture of government. The Director of GovMedia tries to keep it straight with a little bit of spinning here and there, but to me it's not over the top. So kind of let that slide a little bit. You're really creating an avenue for people to hear what government is doing. (Managing Editor)

GovMedia prepares news twice daily for broadcast in four daily bulletins on the station. There is no cost to PMG. The news consists of government press releases and some stories from the newspapers. The station also broadcasts talkback programs weekly. These programs are organised and presented by the former chief archivist. They had been cut from five to two programs a week, but in recent weeks, were increased again to four or five a week. Programming changes are reportedly not unusual, and are in part due to industry instability.

CITV has approximately half-hour news (with advertising) every day, five days a week, and very occasionally broadcasts local documentaries. CITV does some news coverage of the outer islands on an irregular basis, when its journalists are funded to visit these islands.

Cost is not the only factor limiting outer island coverage by these media. Management may be reluctant to release staff for the period required, especially when the news staff is already small.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

On average *CIN* publishes between 10 and 15 local stories per day, almost entirely in English. Cook Islands Maori stories are only published when a member of the public submits a story for free. The Governing Director said, 'We are not publishing in Maori now because nobody is willing to do it. It would be good to do it because there are a lot of people who don't speak English, especially in the outer islands.'

The PMG papers also publish about 10 to 15 local stories each, and Radio Cook Islands broadcasts around 8 stories a day from GovMedia.¹⁵ The papers publish in English.

CITV broadcasts 7 to 12 stories Monday to Friday. CITV and Radio Cook Islands both broadcast in Cook Islands Maori and English.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

CIN cited its governance priorities as Parliament and political reform:

It's not our job to try to bring down the government. We try to be fair but at the same time if we're concerned about something we will try to do something about that. So it is a combination. The community side is things like schools, sports, traditional hair cuttings, things like that. And that is important as well. And obviously what we'll do is give people what they want to read because that way they will buy the paper. (Governing Director)

PMG newspapers target politics and good governance, as well as the government departments directly related to good governance, such as the Audit Office, the Public Service Commission and Crown Law Office. Senior PMG executives have held a range of government positions. At the time of the survey, it was reported that the Managing Editor of the newspapers was taking up a senior position in government. He had previously worked in the Prime Minister's office, and the Deputy Prime Minister's office and as an adviser in Foreign Affairs. He has also been a member of the former National Information Infrastructure Committee.¹⁶

CITV said that education and health are a priority, followed by political reform:

In terms of priority issues, it's not really who gets the most priority issues. For us, it's whoever is more responsive. Some HOMs [Heads of Ministry], like Foreign Affairs, they don't get much because they just shy away. They don't want to come on camera. You ring them and they are not attainable. The ones we do have good working relationships with are Health, Education, Agriculture. And all the political issues from those guys in the GPC [Group for Political Change]

and others. It's kind of sad with some because we try. MOW [Ministry of Works] is another good one as well. (News Director)

During the elections in 2004 the local news on CITV was moved (reportedly without warning) for paid party political broadcasts. CITV said its rationale for this was that the general election is only every five years and it has flexibility with its news timeslot.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

CIN says its news-gathering techniques include interviews, news media releases, the internet, sometimes public notices and classifieds. CIN also accesses PACNEWS and Newsquest.

PMG's papers main news-gathering technique is face-to-face interviews. The Managing Editor said, 'We don't tend to like people who sit on their bums and use the phone all the time. You know, the ring-around style, have you got any news? We want people to go out and get stuff, get good stuff, not ring up and get skim-the-surface stuff.' PMG newspapers used to include PACNEWS, but no longer, as its journalists were not able to devote time to filing stories to PACNEWS as part of the reciprocal arrangement.

Radio Cook Islands rebroadcasts news from RNZI but no longer carries the Morning Report from Radio New Zealand's national service.

CITV gathers its news from classifieds, community notices, Parliament, workshops and annual general meetings. CITV news does not include news from other regional news services. But the station does broadcast news from overseas news services: the ABC's Asia Pacific News, TVNZ's One News and CBS news bulletins from the US. The mix of services broadcast can vary. The collapse of satellite services to mid-Pacific islands early in 2005 saw TVNZ lose a non-priority circuit delivering One News nightly to CITV.

2.12 Media access to government content

There is a generally poor response to media enquiries across all ministries, even when questions are tendered in writing. Health, Education and Police regularly appear on television for what is described as 'soft' interviews about events like the opening of a new clinic or a workshop. However, reportedly all three ministries are frequently reluctant to respond to requests from other media for interviews on more in-depth and often controversial topics.

The researcher reports that much of the government's low prioritisation of good governance media content can be traced back to an opinion that some government officials feel news media cannot be trusted with — or do not deserve — access to public information.

CIN's Editor said he was 'concerned' that GovMedia, which is the conduit to the Prime Minister, had 'not been forthcoming with answering' what he termed 'hard questions put to it by CIN over the past year'.

In addition to this, CIN's Governing Director said:

What I've not liked about GovMedia is they send different stuff to us and the Pitt media group. Government press releases should be sent to everyone. But what they seem to do is send one-off stories, one to us and one to someone else. I don't think it is up to them to decide what goes into any particular newspaper. If they have information they want to get to the public then they should send the information out to everyone.

The Governing Director added that with some exceptions, most government department press releases are 'full of jargon and there is no contact information'. She said the better departments are Education and Agriculture (where the media officer is a former CIN journalist).

PMG's Managing Editor said one of the reasons its papers cover politics is that:

When you saw the stuff that was being decided in government and that information was not being made public and these are decisions that affect everybody, then why not do it? It's got to be done. If we didn't do that stuff it would never have come to light.

CITV's News Director noted that the budget papers, copies of legislation, reports or any printed matter from Parliament can all be purchased. The station videotapes ministerial speeches as it requires vision for news. However, the News Director added:

But when I came back from the [media training] meetings, you know you're all fired up. Those eight principles of good governance, it was like I'd try to get comments from our politicians here but it didn't seem to be on the top of their priorities.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

CIN said lack of journalism experience and staff numbers are the main constraint, as a number of its journalists are new to the profession. Currently the paper is at full strength with five journalists, but this can vary.

PMG newspapers and CITV also cited the number of journalists as the main factor. The length of CITV's nightly news is also shaped by the amount of advertising to be included.

2.14 Threats to funding

CIN's Governing Director said that for a period after 1999 the Environmental Impact Assessment papers from the Environment Department were only published in the PMG media. At this time, one of PMG's executives was also the chief adviser to the Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the Environment Council and Chairman of the Telecom board of directors. That situation has now changed.

The PMG Managing Editor said neither government nor corporate sponsorship had been withdrawn because of editorial content. However, none of the PMG media outlets receive material from the Justice Ministry: 'No news, no advertising, nothing. No comments. What you get is, oh, we can't tell you because our boss doesn't like you.' The Editor added:

You've still got the legal angles there. We kept a wall scrapbook of our threats. So like every threat is pinned to the wall, and the wall became plastered with these letters, and we would have a chuckle.

CITV broadcasts the nightly CITC and Watty News and ensures that its major sponsor, the Cook Islands Trading Corporation (CITC), the country's leading retail and wholesale company, is contacted and/or interviewed on stories of promotional relevance to the company. CITC also promotes products like house paint or, formerly, shampoo (CITC and Wella Local News) through its name sponsorship of CITV's news half-hour.

2.15 Industry training

The national college of the Cook Islands, Tereora College, used to include journalism as part of its English classes for Form 6 students. The program was started by a journalist from the CIN on a voluntary basis in 1997. When she left the newspaper for another job, the program was run by the college with its own teachers. However, the former principal said that curriculum development took too much time and the component was dropped about two years ago.

The main training for journalists is donor-funded short courses. CIN's Governing Director expressed some reservations about this training:

There was PINA. [Cook Islands News has not been a member for several years because] we've always found them to be not helpful, because you couldn't tell if they'd done anything, and the training was not totally relevant. We did have one training session that was useful, the Thompson Foundation in the UK. Someone from the foundation came to us and the sort of training he was doing was not just for the CI News but other media as well. It was useful having somebody here, more useful than sending somebody away because that's just one person anyway. Very rarely is the training more than one week.

The Manukau Polytechnic Certificate in Pacific Islands Journalism [now defunct] was good. I've got my doubts about degrees in journalism. I'd rather have someone with a degree in something else. A Degree in Education, I think that is much more useful than something majoring in journalism. I'd rather have somebody who has experience as a background. But I like having a choice.

CIN provides basic, informal on-the-job training for cadets, and access to some online training.¹⁷ The journalists are expected to train at their own pace, and to date none has completed the online course:

From an editor's point of view training helps. I mean, when you've got three or four people who know what they're supposed to be doing as opposed to turning their stories in and there are holes in them. That just comes down to experience. On some occasions I am just completely rewriting stories. Not because I don't like what the person has written. It's just so full of holes and it won't stand up. We've also had a high turnover in staff so you get one person on and six or seven months later that person's gone, you've got to start over again. (Editor)

CITV has no set program of training, on or off the job, for first-year staff. However, PMG is reportedly pro-training, treating overseas workshops and the like as an incentive for staff. CITV journalists have attended short-course training on Rarotonga and off the island with PMG's support. This includes coverage of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting and the Regional Forum meetings.¹⁸

The number and relevance of training workshops was raised as an issue by some Cook Islands respondents from all three sectors. A former public member of the Cook Islands Media Council sums up these concerns when he says: 'We are plagued by too many workshops and conferences. And we've got some professionals attendees at these conferences now. We're a small country sending any Tom, Dick or Harry if it's sponsored.'

He adds that in order to improve professional journalism standards in the Cook Islands, the media:

Has to actually go out and attract people. The pay today is not right, your industry is paying young people peanuts. Are you going to get young people, bright sparks, who want to go into it? Journalism is a huge responsibility. We've got to attract them. Whether you like it or not, dollars do talk. So if you want to promote standards then that's the first step.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

CIN's code of ethics is pinned on a wall. It is not something that is given to each journalist. CIN's Governing Director described its code of ethics as 'common sense':

We don't say look at rule number three. Basically it's to ask yourself whether what you write is fair, would you like it said about you? Some of the things they do overseas we wouldn't do over here because it's a smaller place. So we don't really have a problem with that sort of thing [ethics]. Defamation is always something you have to watch out for. It's mainly common sense.

PMG has no written code of ethics for its newspapers, but the Managing Editor said the journalists knew when to refer issues to him for advice.

CITV has no code of ethics in writing, but the journalists have been given reference books on ethics to read.

Defamation has been an issue for CIN, PMG and CITV. There have been a number of instances over the past decade of the government alleging that media content (including cartoons) was defamatory.¹⁹ The most recent involved the publication of a satirical letter, purportedly from Prime Minister Dr Robert Woonton to Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, challenging government support for the one-China policy. The letter was published in the *Cook Islands Herald*.²⁰

The CITV News Director said the station had learned from experience:

I think when I was still learning, for somebody to make an allegation it was like big news for us so we would put it on. Now when they make an allegation we are a bit more choosy and we would look for something or somebody who could back that up. Or if we had personal knowledge like when we went to Atiu and saw the water things, we could put those people on because we had seen it for ourselves. We have learnt where things have gone wrong and we are a lot wiser and choosier about what we put on ... and I think it helps as you grow: news sense when they get caught up in their mud slinging.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

The Cook Islands Media Association (CIMA) was established in 1997, as a more inclusive successor to the Cook Islands Journalists Association, which was set up in 1993. Apart from membership fees, CIMA receives no funding from any source, and its executive serves on a voluntary basis. The media industry suffered a bitter split in 1999 and there is now little or no industry cooperation and little communication between the major industry factions. As a result of the split, the rival Cook Islands Media Group was established by PMG but it has not released a constitution. Currently, neither CIMA nor the Cook Islands Media Group appear to be operational.

There was an attempt at industry self-regulation in 1999, when the Cook Islands Media Council was established, but it failed a year later. A former Cook Islands Land Court Commissioner was the Chairman, and there were four members, one each from government and the industry, and two from the general public. Based on the New Zealand Press Council, the Cook Islands Media Council was structured to be independent from both government and industry.

Complainants were required to correspond with the media organisation about their complaint first. Only if the complainant was dissatisfied with the response would council members agree to consider a complaint. To have their complaint accepted, the complainant would have to agree to forgo any legal action against the media organisation concerned. Once accepted for consideration, a copy of the complaint would go to the media organisation for comment. When the comment was received by the Council its members would sit to consider the complaint and the response from the media organisation. CIMA members were required to publish or broadcast the decisions of the Council. Being voluntary, the Council could not enforce publication or broadcast of its decisions with media organisations that were not members of CIMA.

At first the Council proved effective in deciding on complaints from the public. Decisions were issued and published by *CIN* and the weekly *Cook Islands Press*. However, after a while there were a large number of complaints from people closely linked with government. Council members became concerned that there were too many complaints taking too much time. Members resigned one by one until there was none left. None of them sought their own replacements, as required by the Council's Constitution, thus resulting in its demise.

As the Council was supposed to be independent from the news media, the industry felt it could do nothing to intervene to reverse the decline in membership.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

As an industry, the news media is relatively young. Cook Islands news media have yet to reach a stage of maturity that recognises the worth of sustained unity in community outreach and industry cooperation on common issues. Instead, after long decades of government control, journalists have been busy testing and often exceeding the limits of generally accepted media practice, engaging in quite intense rivalry along the way. Government and other sectors have reportedly been alienated.

Discussions about political reform and desired outcomes of good governance continue to be debated within the news media — a process that in itself leads to better governance content. The media, however, have been less responsive to criticism and calls for review. There is no formal complaints process or independent arbiter, no complaints council or standards authority, voluntary or otherwise. There are no performance targets, career paths, wage structures or pay reviews. There are no formally functional codes of ethics, constitutionally registered associations, or management or training councils to assist with industry development.

For these reasons, a media reform project that addresses these issues is proposed. It could include the following:

- Professionalism: review lessons learned from earlier attempts, with the Cook Islands Journalism Association, Cook Islands Media Association and the Cook Islands Media Council;
- Development: draw up plans to reformat the above entities, including review of legislation proposed by government;
- Journalists: survey working conditions, wage structure, training, career development and ethics concerns;
- Management: review conflict resolution, training facilitation, current best management practice;
- Commercial viability: explore ways to assist the media to be more commercially robust to strengthen their independence;
- Government, NGO and private sector leaders: review public relations strategies, media awareness and basic interview survival skills as part of a confidence-boosting exercise to equip community leaders to deal with the media;
- Heads of Ministry and Members of Parliament: convene workshops involving government, NGOs and the media to discuss freedom of information and to develop processes to establish this.

In addition, the following ongoing processes could assist:

- An annual media forum to address continued long-range development plans;
- Six monthly industry meetings with NGO and other community representatives to discuss the media industry's editorial performance and provide community feedback to news media;
- Some consideration could be given to establishing a national media NGO and helping ensure sustainability by assigning it responsibilities for compiling reports from various media organisations in the manner of a national news agency. Such an NGO could conduct the

activity itself or contract individuals, companies or another NGO established along the lines of an Institute of Investigative Journalism, as has been seen in countries like the Philippines. An agency operation could also be the focus for advanced journalism activities like investigative projects and training. This would allow sensitive issues and topics to be handled by an agency with national and industry authority, by journalists respected and selected by their peers, with the experience and training to handle such topics with fairness, balance and sensitivity. Having news reprocessed through an agency operating to international standards would also act as a check and balance to the sometimes varying editorial qualities of individual media companies.

In order to improve and institutionalise journalism training, a scoping exercise could also be conducted to assess local capacity to help reinstitute journalism or media studies at the national college. This would include:

- Suitable personnel;
- Resources, both foreign and domestic;
- Curriculum outlines;
- Desired outcomes;
- Affiliation with New Zealand's Qualifications Authority.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

GovMedia is located in the Prime Minister's office. GovMedia's role is to keep the public informed about what the government is doing, and how policy affects people. There is no established process for individual ministries to report activities to GovMedia, but the Director does cover other ministries.

GovMedia produces news releases on an almost daily basis, with more than 2000 available online. However, the section does not exist in any formal or statutory capacity, and does not have a separate budget allocation or defined responsibilities. This low prioritisation is reflected in the fact that even GovMedia reports difficulties in getting answers from the Prime Minister and other ministers to questions raised by the media.

Departments producing regular media content are: Health, Environmental Services (International Waters Project, or IWP), Agriculture, Police and the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). A striking feature about much of the government media content is that it consists mainly of advertisements and paid columns for awareness campaigns. The radio and television programs that are produced consist mainly of one person speaking.²¹

Human resources

Among more than 1600 employees in government, there are only two full-time media officers, both of whom are in GovMedia.

The Director at the FIU is responsible for all the press releases and other media content as part of her other duties. The unit also provides training for journalists on its interactive computer-based software so that they have a better understanding of its work.

There is one Information and Education Officer in the Ministry of Health, who is responsible for its media content and other duties.

The Senior Projects Officer, Agriculture, is responsible for media production and other duties, and is assisted by officers who have specific areas of expertise.

Police officers appear to take turns presenting on television.

IWP currently has one officer, the IWP National Director, working on media production and education programs. IWP is looking for a media officer.

3.2 Government media processes

The Prime Minister's office has a website that was maintained by GovMedia up to December 2004. As in the past, there is currently some uncertainty surrounding management of this office following a change of government. The Director interviewed for the survey did not have his contract renewed when it finished in December 2004, and the Prime Minister's office has indicated

that a replacement Director is not a priority.²² During the Director's time, GovMedia used email to distribute press releases (most days); held a press conference monthly to quarterly; and produced news bulletins on radio twice-daily. These sorts of measures depended more on personal initiative than any institutional capacities.

GovMedia was the only section of government that produced press releases on a regular basis. These releases were often then published verbatim in the *CIN* and PMG papers, although there has been a change of approach from *CIN* recently.

The media began to rate GovMedia as a poor place to seek information due to its inability to get timely responses to their questions from ministers. *CIN* recently decided to stop using GovMedia releases, expressing concern at the failure by GovMedia to secure answers to follow-up media questions. *CIN*'s Editor said they were willing to publish articles giving government's viewpoint but, in the absence of balancing discussion about public concerns, the paper decided to stop using the press releases because they did not want to be seen as just pushing government propaganda.

Hansard is available, but it can be late. Parliament has very limited sittings, around 20 per year in recent years. Hansard is sold by the day and the price varies from document to document, according to size. As a general rule, it costs NZ\$0.50 per page.

Radio Cook Islands broadcasts parliamentary sessions in their entirety, but in-camera sessions happen quite frequently, such as those relating to offshore finance laws and parliamentarians' superannuation. Reasons given for these sessions include the sensitivity of the issues and concern about the lack of professionalism in the media. The Director of GovMedia said: 'I think some journalists up here are very poor at providing an accurate record of what people say or do.'

The government ministries and departments interviewed for the survey were GovMedia, Agriculture, Environmental Services (IWP) and the FIU. The Information and Education Officer from the Ministry of Health was not available, but the Public Health Director was able to provide some information on her behalf.

3.3 Government department media content

The Ministry of Agriculture has a paid fortnightly newspaper column, AgFocus, in the *CIN*, awareness advertisements on television, a 30-minute promotional television program monthly on CITV, a one-hour monthly radio program and a short weekly radio program on Cook Islands Radio, and issues press releases as required for all media. Content covers quarantine, food safety, biodiversity, livestock, pesticide use, exports and research.

National Environment Services, including an IWP component, has nightly awareness advertisements on television on environmental impact assessments, the IWP, biodiversity and export controls. It also produces a bi-monthly newsletter (200 copies), radio programs on Radio Cook Islands (weekly), takes part in television interviews (event based), had a paid weekly newspaper column in a PMG weekly, the *Cook Islands Herald*, and produces news for GovMedia's Radio Cook Islands bulletin. It is currently exploring the feasibility of a website, which NGOs in the Cook Islands could also use. The IWP focus is on building environmental awareness among the community and other government departments and agencies on issues relating to water.

The FIU in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) was created in 2002 to monitor money laundering and related activities. Its media content consists of 'barrage' advertising in all media about new legislative requirements and actions that people need to take as a result of these. The aim of these campaigns is to raise general awareness about issues to do with the whole financial sector. The Director also writes articles and takes part in interviews on CITV.

FIU produces press releases for all media as required by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on new financial legislation, such as on money laundering. It runs interactive computer training, as required, to familiarise media with key financial concepts, enabling more confident reporting on finance intelligence issues, both domestic and international. FIU has a solid media outreach program and is one of the higher profile government users of media.

The Ministry of Health produces nightly awareness advertisements on television and produces a radio program up to three times a week on Radio Cook Islands on general awareness for Maori on a wide range of health issues. Topics cover obesity, diabetes, heart disease and dental health. There are no press releases and the media reports that it is difficult to access comprehensive health statistics, even though the department has its own website, which recently, for the first time in more than a decade, released a limited range of figures. The Ministry has the second-highest budget in government but there is no budget line for media production.²³

The Ministry of Police produces a weekly CITV crime-watch program and takes part in television interviews on CITV.²⁴ Issues include security, disaster management, traffic, major investigations, crime statistics, missing property, break-ins and traffic.

The Ministry of Culture uses television, newspapers, email and a website to distribute events-based information through classifieds, display advertisements, interviews and press releases, as required.

The Department of National Human Resources Development places advertisements in television and in newspapers, and does interviews for these media on available scholarships, deadlines, success of previous awardees and areas of student study concern.

The Ministry of Education produces a newsletter, the *Education Gazette* (monthly), takes part in television interviews (weekly) and places classified advertisements in newspapers on exam data, standards, vacancies, training and study opportunities, staff profiles and policy analysis.

Statistics Cook Islands is described as a useful site, possibly ranking with MFEM and the Audit Office as a three-part source of official spending, general statistics and comments on governance issues. In common with printed statistics, these statistical bulletins can lag behind actual events by as much as six months or more.

The Natural Heritage Project has an extensive database of Cook Islands flora and fauna. However, media content is limited to very occasional newspaper opinion pieces written by the Director, reportedly heavy with scientific jargon, rather than shorter and more frequent updates relating to the database and what the figures might mean.

The Tourism Corporation did produce monthly newsletters and post them online from December 2003 to June 2004, but there have been none since then. This apparently follows a pattern seen before among departments. After an initial burst of enthusiasm, updates slow and then stop, as government officers realise how much work is involved in producing media content, and other priorities take precedence.

The ministries of Internal Affairs, Marine Resources and Works do not produce media content.

Most government media content is produced in English and Maori, with English favoured for newspapers and newsletters.

Twelve government ministries or agencies support websites:

- Audit Office (<http://www.auditoffice.gov.ck/>)
- Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (<http://www.cook-islands.com/>)
- Development Investment Board (DIB) (http://www.cookislands-invest.com/ipa_default.asp)
- GovMedia (<http://www.cook-islands.gov.ck/>)
- MFEM (<http://www.mfem.gov.ck/>)
- Ministry of Cultural Development (<http://www.culture.gov.ck/>)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (<http://www.mfai.gov.ck/>) (under construction since 2002).
- Ministry of Health (<http://www.health.gov.ck/>)
- Ministry of Marine Resources (<http://www.mmr.gov.ck/>)
- Natural Heritage Project (<http://www2.bishopmuseum.org/PBS/cookislands/>)
- Office of the Public Service Commissioner (<http://www.cook-islands.gov.ck/ministry-opsc.php>)
- Statistics Cook Islands (<http://www.stats.gov.ck/>)

Until December 2004 GovMedia was the only one to update its website with regular press releases. The Director of GovMedia said the government's approach to website design and maintenance is an issue:

All of these things will be linked and integrated with the Government website so it's all got a consistent look. At the moment some ministries have designed their own, others have got professionally designed things but the DIB one hasn't been updated for a year and a half. You try to get up-to-date statistics on the website but they're just not there. They're six months behind. So there's a real hodgepodge of approaches.

3.4 Media governance priorities

GovMedia's content covers government policy, national affairs, foreign relations, the FATF, ministry outputs, political reform, ministerial announcements and major announcements. The governance priorities for the main media-producing departments are listed in Section 3.3, Government Department Media Content.

3.5 Target audiences

GovMedia targets all Cook Islanders. It does not have a formal process to monitor the effectiveness of its media content, but the Director does monitor the media and get feedback from people informally.

The FIU and the departments of Health and Environment also said that they targeted everyone. Health does have some more specific targets for certain content, such as teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and the parasitic disease, filariasis.

Agriculture targets a range of audiences depending on the topic: growers, breeders and the community. The Senior Project Officer said, 'I've seen the results of that. Target audiences are coming back to us and saying, look where's the information on this, can we have it? [We get audience feedback] and it doesn't only go to me, it goes straight to the head of ministry.'

The target audiences for IWP-produced media are as follows: IWP's newsletter targets the general public; television advertising targets landowners and developers, as well as others involved in activities with environmental impact; and recycling advertising is aimed mainly at homeowners and youth.

3.6 Qualifications and training

In 2003 the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association included a session on working with the media for Cook Islands Members of Parliament. Apparently only two MPs attended. GovMedia's Director said some politicians

lack understanding of how the media really work. And what my role is. They think that I can write a press release and they can say anything and that it will automatically be published in the paper and that it is their right. And it doesn't work that way at all.

GovMedia's Director is an experienced journalist. He was editor of a community newspaper in New Zealand and he has been involved in public relations and advertising. He was also an editor at *CIN*. The officer who assists him is an experienced broadcaster. In the 1990s this officer undertook public broadcasting service training in Hawaii and on his return, established talkback on Radio Cook Islands, a first for the country. According to the Director, training and experience is important:

We had somebody working in the office for a while who had no media qualifications or knowledge at all but it was not a satisfactory arrangement. They only produced one story a week. And just a refusal to take much notice of anything or any efforts to train them, which is an ongoing problem.

The Information and Education Officer in the Health Department has undertaken a range of health promotion short courses while on the job.

The Senior Projects Officer in Agriculture and the Director of the FIU (who has a police background) have not received any media training and have learned on the job. Agriculture does not require officers working in media production to have qualifications in this area. The current officer said:

You start with in-house training. You can get assistance from outside agencies and you either do that locally within your own budget or send staff on overseas training. Agriculture has a variety of sources to go to for media training. But in this day and age it helps to have a media background ...

If a ministry was to have a media relations person on their staff at least some training should be given. They need to do multimedia rather than straight radio and television. The basic rules of journalism are really all you will need. I think the ministry is just figuring it out there's people who need information. How? We can't go individually and give it to them one by one, and we can't always be dragging them into the office for meetings. So get it out in the open through the media. And I would encourage anybody who is in media-related positions to actually go for at least the basics in order to get the grounding. At least train them in the art of expression in written form. And the toys that go with it. We need to get some training in cameras.

The Director of IWP is responsible for media production for the IWP project. He was one of the pioneer television journalists at CITV soon after it started in 1989, and moved to Environment Services during the mid-1990s when he worked as the Education, Awareness and Media Officer.

The IWP Director said further training in reporting, writing, scripting, television and radio production and public relations is needed for all new recruits working on the project and in Environment Services.

3.7 Equipment

GovMedia has two computers and internet access, but does not have the ability to record and edit video footage. It has a radio studio but no radio equipment. The Director said GovMedia requires a good digital camera and tape recorders as a start.

Health outsources most of its media production. The FIU is well equipped with computers and internet access. Agriculture has computers, digital cameras and recorders and can produce all its media content in-house, except printed material. It outsources its printing.

IWP has access to one computer, one four-track audio mixer, one double audio cassette player, two VHS video players, one amplifier with speakers, one inkjet printer, tape recorders and a VHS manual camera. The Director said, 'What we can't do at the moment is transfer stuff from VHS to digital.' There is still a need to contract work out, such as documentary production and printing the newsletter. Television advertisements are produced in-house.

3.8 Government–media relationships

GovMedia expressed a preference for using *CIN* because of difficulties the Prime Minister has had with PMG. However, as noted earlier, *CIN* is now using less GovMedia material due to its concern with its ability to supply timely responses to *CIN*'s questions to ministries.

The GovMedia Director said:

I think it's working pretty well up to recently when the CIN for some inexplicable reason decided not to run our stuff. It's run pretty well. In fact I've been quite staggered at the amount of stuff they've run from us. Everything I write usually gets used. Ninety per cent of the time. When it's added to or altered I ask them to add their byline to the GovMedia byline. Improvements would be if we could get things running on a more stable basis ... so that we don't have these little glitches where they suddenly stop cooperating. We have had situations where we were all ordered not to give any stuff to one media organisation. And we've ignored it. Because I felt the information flow had to be available to everybody and I didn't want to shut them out and that group were more influential than the other. I felt that if I stopped I knew that one side would contact the media organisation overseas and we would be told that we were censoring the news and withholding information.

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

Government's apparent preference for media inputs it can control or shape, such as advertising, paid newspaper columns and interviews with a reportedly non-critical television service, suggest that it does not see media governance as an immediate priority. The sometimes tense history between government and media in the Cook Islands has been a factor in this. Mechanisms to improve government–media working relationships and trust need to be explored.

Government's appreciation of media awareness and advocacy also needs to be broadened and reinforced with workshops and meetings over a period of time. Such forums could be used to address misconceptions by elected representatives and senior officials that a media or public relations unit can — or should — make public controversies 'disappear' without anything appearing in the media. Instead, government stakeholders could be encouraged to consider public debate and even criticism in the context of a feedback mechanism that enables elected representatives to monitor the impact of government policy implementation and public response to this process. There are effective government media examples to draw on as part of this process, namely the IWP, FIU and Ministry of Agriculture content.

The feasibility of a central media resource or production facility for government, linked to GovMedia, could also be useful as a technical and production resource, and also to ensure a coordinated government response to issues. The IWP Coordinator said:

I think that is why it is important for government to come together in the matter of sharing resources, maximising the benefits of what we have. But that would be a good idea, someone

who just oversees what's going on and can help out things like that. And if we need assistance with some software these fellows should have all the answers. Also, at one time during a controversy over the environment we were close to running down each other in public. I've seen that sort of thing. If there was a central agency to bring everybody together then I know what Public Health is doing. If I have an issue then I talk with Public Health so we can find out what you fellows are doing. Then I think the messages going out will not be contradictory.

The Director of the FIU suggested that budget lines for media production and media outputs be built into ministerial workplans to encourage sustainability.

A legislative scoping exercise involving consultation with government, media and civil society on processes required for the effective implementation of the proposed Cook Islands Official Information Bill could also be considered.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

There are 259 NGOs registered with the Registrar of Incorporated Societies. Some of these are no longer active. Most active NGOs are focused on sports, youth and women's issues.

Community organisations are well serviced by the media, particularly television, which provides updates on NGO activities. Fewer NGOs have the time to produce their own media, as executive NGO members across all registered societies effectively number only dozens of individuals, not hundreds.

As a result about four NGOs interact regularly with the media on governance issues and only one of these NGO produces media content (not just advertising).

Over the years other NGOs have made sporadic attempts at awareness campaigns, newsletters, videos and radio programs. What content is produced is usually released on a paid or sponsored basis and/or as part of specific projects, most commonly those funded by overseas agencies. Events drive most of the interaction between NGOs and the news media.

The survey includes interviews with three NGOs — Koutu Nui, the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation (PIAF), and the Cook Islands branch of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) for Nature (also known as the World Wildlife Fund). Information on other NGOs listed below was collected by the in-country researcher.

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

Koutu Nui focuses on culture and community capacity-building in the outer islands. The Koutu Nui *ra'ui* campaign in 1998 is described as one of the better examples of NGO and media interaction.²⁵ It combined traditional conservation practice with multimedia advocacy, and focused on protecting the marine environment and the need for community to be involved and not rely simply on legislative action. Traditional leaders proclaimed marine conservation areas and spoke extensively through the media about the benefits of respecting the marine conservation areas. The community responded and lagoon fish stocks increased considerably in a short period, after years of being seriously overexploited. It is felt that the Koutu Nui *ra'ui* campaign worked because it was community-based and provided people with the context they needed — custom marine conservation rather than laws imposed by Parliament — to make an informed decision. Having achieved its objective with the *ra'ui* program, Koutu Nui no longer produces media content other than making public speeches and responding to interview requests.

PIAF is a regional NGO with its secretariat based in the Cook Islands. It produces email newsletters (monthly), PDF website files, press releases (as required) and interviews on awareness, advocacy and news events. Interviews can range from one to dozens a week, and it has a website (<http://www.pacificaids.org>). Content focus is on stigma reduction, discrimination, public advocacy, policy and legislation, treatment solutions and prevention. At the time of the survey, PIAF was the only NGO with a paid part-time Information Assistant.

WWF is event driven because it does not have the funds to run a regular media program. It mainly contacts the media to arrange interviews. It is also working on a proposal to increase funding for media content for the Cook Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (CIANGO) in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

WWF partnered with Koutu Nui in its *ra'ui* campaign, providing much of the technical assistance for the awareness component.

CIANGO's main media output is display advertising on television, radio and in newspapers on the MDGs. CIANGO plans to produce more comprehensive media governance content after its next application for MDG funding.

The Cook Islands Breast Cancer Association, established in 2004, has produced one or two newsletters from member funding.

The Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce has recently started taking a higher profile, setting up an email list for members and sending minutes of monthly meetings and organising public meetings on current issues. It uses classified advertising on television and in newspapers to publicise AGMs and special issues meetings, such as broadcasting and foreign investment. It has no other media content.

The Cook Islands National Council of Women (NCW) funded a series of documentaries produced, scripted and reported by a freelance journalist.

The Cook Islands Red Cross's main media content is interviews (conducted by the media) and advertising awareness programs. Media used are television and newspapers. The interviews cover events such as workshops. Content focus is HIV/AIDS, disaster management, first aid and obesity.

Media governance priorities of NGOs tend to reflect those promoted by aid donors. World dates such as World AIDS Day or Clean-Up the World Day are also widely promoted by NGOs in the media, sometimes in partnership with ministries. Other governance priorities are: political reform, education, health and social services, justice and police.

Many NGO interviews and advertisements are in English although a recent rebalancing seems to be taking place as concern grows about the diminishing use of Maori. Indeed, the most effective campaigns are perceived as those using both languages.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

Koutu Nui and WWF said their target audience is everyone. They receive informal feedback on their media content from people they meet and letters to the papers.

PIAF targets world, regional and national news services as a means of raising public awareness of HIV/AIDS issues with interviews and press releases. Monthly e-bulletins of 20 or more PDF pages have also been sent to fellow NGOs, ministries and other multi-sectoral stakeholders.

4.4 NGO media capacity

As noted, PIAF was the only NGO with a paid part-time information officer, and this position is for six months only. WWF and Koutu Nui have volunteer staff that assist in this area.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

The officers working as media volunteers do not require qualifications or experience in media journalism. However, the current WWF Country Manager is a former *CIN* journalist, and the Information Assistant at PIAF is an experienced journalist employed on a six-month contract.

The Koutu Nui volunteer did a media familiarisation course during the *ra'ui* campaign with the former WWF Country Manager, who was an experienced journalist.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The WWF Country Manager and the Koutu Nui President both suggested training for the media, rather than NGOs. They said the media are not equipped to adequately cover developmental or governance issues, that they lack investigative skills, and that they are not pro-active. 'They don't seem to go and find out ... they sit and wait for you to tell them what is going on. Which is still part of the news effort.'²⁶ WWF's Country Manager gave this example of the media response to her attempts to get the media coverage of the MDGs:

In order to involve the media with awareness building, hey, I've even asked posed questions to the media to ask me these questions so we can have a story! That's how desperate I got. So far no response [so and so] always says to me, oh, you write the article and send it to me.

A senior journalist interviewed for the survey said, 'I am not used to doing health stories and education stories. It's too soft. Nothing sexy in it, nothing bitey.' At the heart of this

comment is the question of what is defined as newsworthy — and this is an issue for the media, NGOs and government departments.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

The NGOs rely on the media to produce and distribute their media content. However, they said recording equipment (video and audio) could be valuable for collecting material from the outer islands.

4.8 NGO media processes

In addition to concerns about media capacity to cover development issues, noted above, another concern raised by Kouta Nui and WWF was the lack of credit they received for articles they had written that were published, and the way their material was presented in the media:

And then he plays around with it and writes it like he wrote it.

That's the same with what I send in, they put their name at the bottom and claim it as their own.

That's what I find with the media; it is not always accurate to what we want done, according to how we want the message to get out.

WWF's Country Manager also believes that paying the media to publish articles is a governance issue:

Because we all know that's not right [paying media to write stories]. We all know that is their role. If they studied the MDGs like they should, they can pick up that there's a story on goal one, there's a story in goal two, three, it covers us, the Cook Islands. Go out and interview people about how they should achieve these goals. All the MDGs are all community issues, all development issues. If the media does its role, it doesn't even have to come from a lobby group, or WWF, or CIANGO, or even UNDP. It would come as a result of the media taking their responsibilities to those issues and bringing it to the public. It is not happening because I think capacity is a big issue. I can tell when I talk to ... and I can tell she's scared! She comes up with all these excuses, 'It's going to be hard, it's going to be controversial, people are going to say things.' She's not thinking that it's a great story that can make or break her name.

Among NGOs, appreciation of print deadlines is described as poor. There is also some confusion about what constitutes media content, with advertisements referred to as 'articles' and 'stories'. There is, however, better appreciation that different media suit different audiences:

If it's a Rarotonga audience then television is an excellent medium. But if we're wanting people throughout the Cook Islands to be aware of what's going on, then obviously we'd use Cook Islands News which gets delivered to the outer islands. We have used Cook Islands Herald locally. We do target certain media. The radio, for example, if you want to get things out there very quickly and want it to be heard, that would be my third option. (President, Koutu Nui)

Costs taken from CIANGO's MDG campaign provide an example of media costs in the Cook Islands.²⁷ For example, one television spot is NZ\$30; a radio advertisement is NZ\$5.00; newspaper articles NZ\$35; talkback radio program NZ\$70; and a television forum NZ\$180.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

Community radio or television was not an option considered by the NGOs surveyed. There are community stations on the outer islands, so the potential exists.

4.10 Funding to produce media content

The 1998 Koutu Nui *ra'ui* campaign received funding to produce video advertising for television. WWF was the lead donor, along with NZAID.

In 2002 the NCW received funding from the South Pacific Forum Secretariat for a series of television documentaries on women entrepreneurs in the Cook Islands.

More recently, in 2004, CIANGO received UNDP funding for media promotion of MDG goals.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

The voluntary nature of many NGO staff in the Cook Islands presents a major challenge to building media governance capacity. One consideration would be to improve CIANGO's capacity to act

as an umbrella body and resource for NGOs interested in producing governance content for the media. This could include CIANGO conducting media awareness and media advocacy training for NGOs, and assisting them to access producers and/or equipment to produce this.

NGOs have made great use of email technology to inform others about their goals and objectives since about 1996. With very recent advances in simple email-to-web publishing, NGOs should be encouraged to take greater advantage of free technologies, like web-logs, to start building an online resource of materials that can be accessed by media, and others, at any time. Some web-logs are also starting to offer RSS, or Real Simple Syndication. RSS is another emerging technology that allows a 'feed' to be produced that can be picked up by special 'readers' and websites with the reader installed.

Some NGOs might need further training to leverage emails from internal memos for their members to formats suitable for wider consumption. Once enough of these resources build up online, key personnel could be identified for training to massage existing and future information into more readily recognised online profiles like 'Frequently Asked Questions' and 'About Us'.

Some NGOs have proven themselves successful in attracting support for media content activities, for example, MDG funds. The media, however, have not had the same success in attracting the same kinds of sponsorship. NGO-media partnerships could work to address this. The following options could be considered.

- NGOs and other regional and international donor agencies could review their current information production practices, and consider how they could use the media to broaden their information targets. Aid agencies could directly sponsor newspaper columns, radio and television spots which highlight donor, NGO and/or government activities.
- Ground-up change might be enabled by also assisting growing efforts to mainstream a variety of governance issues through existing daily and weekly news media workers so that news programs or newspaper sections, for example, might be named after global, regional and national governance priorities rather than commercial sponsors.
- This funding could provide additional funds that are spent directly on new or existing journalists who are focused on agreed areas or journalistic rounds such as environment, governance and health. Such areas or rounds could be defined under a memorandum of understanding that ensures credibility by retaining final editorial control under the media organisation as per normal journalistic convention.

¹ Source: <http://www.dfat.gov.au>

² Source: http://www.bizconnections.com/pacific_telecom_regulators.htm

³ Source: 'Information Bill', CINEWS, PACNEWS 1, Thurs 17 March 2005.

⁴ Source: 'Information Bill', CINEWS, PACNEWS 1, Thurs 17 March 2005.

⁵ The interim board is in place until the proposed Media Bill is enacted. Once this occurs the government plans to appoint new board members with a set term.

⁶ 'Task force to decide future of broadcasting services', Cook Islands Government Online New Release, 6 March 2004.

⁷ There have been significant changes in media ownership and personnel with the privatisation of the public service radio and television, and it is possible that there were guidelines, but the government and media officers interviewed for the survey had no recollection of them.

⁸ See International Press Institute, World Press Freedom Review 2003, Cook Islands <http://www.freemedia.at/wpfr/Australasia/cookIsland.htm>, Pitt v CIN.

⁹ Source: CINCB General Manager.

¹⁰ According to the Pitt Media Group, since 1994 successive governments have not prioritised approval of the aid-funded project to improve transmission.

¹¹ Source: Pacific Media Watch online No. 4495, 1 September 2004.

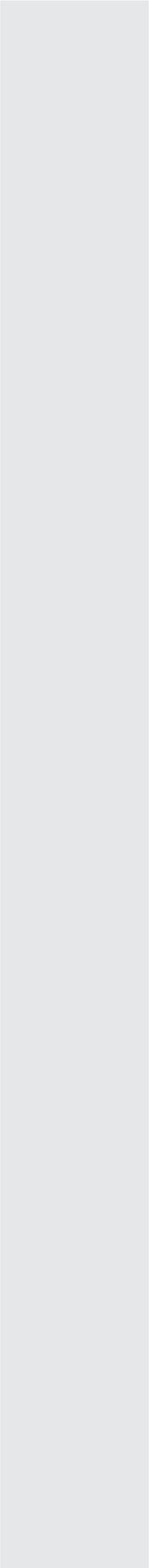
¹² All currency in this chapter, with one exception, is in New Zealand dollars. NZ\$1.00 equals AU\$0.93. Government has stated the amount for CINBC in US\$.

¹³ Source: In-country SANA researcher, Jason Brown.

¹⁴ Journalists who started with the station when it opened in 1989 all had less than 10 years experience.

¹⁵ GovMedia can include stories from CIN in its news.

- ¹⁶ Jason Brown, 'Govmedia Disappears', Pacific Media Watch online news, 13 March 2005.
- ¹⁷ The freelance journalism component produced by the New Zealand Institute of Business Studies (<http://www.nzibs.co.nz>).
- ¹⁸ As part of the AusAID-funded Pacific Media Initiative.
- ¹⁹ See International Press Institute, World Freedom Reviews Cook Islands <http://www.freemedia.at/wpfr/Australasia/cookIsland.htm>.
- ²⁰ See 'Cook Islands Govt Seeks Libel Action Over Spoof', Pacific Media Watch online, 14 May 2004.
- ²¹ The 'talking head' approach to government and NGO programs is an issue in a number of Pacific Island countries as this format is usually not an effective way to engage an audience's interest. It is cost and time effective for the producers involved, and does not require a high level of production skills.
- ²² In March 2005 the Chief-of-Staff in the Office of the Prime Minister said, 'A GovMedia replacement is not a priority compared to cyclone relief efforts.' The Cook Islands has been hit by five cyclones since early 2005. The Assistant Director, GovMedia, is currently in charge, but the government website with its links to each ministry is no longer being updated by GovMedia and the office is not issuing press releases. The former Director of GovMedia has now been employed by PMG to manage and edit its newspapers (Jason Brown, 'Govmedia Disappears', Pacific Media Watch online news, 13 March 2005).
- ²³ The lack of specific budget lines for media production and media work plans for government departments is an issue for many of the government departments surveyed in the 14 Forum Island countries.
- ²⁴ The weekly police program generally consists of a policeman speaking to camera, occasionally with some material inserted by CITV.
- ²⁵ Ra'ui is a traditional conservation system, which prohibits access to allow the rejuvenation of natural resources. Five marine Ra'ui are in place in the lagoon on Rarotonga to protect the marine environment and to allow marine plants and animals an opportunity to grow and breed, and spread to other parts of the lagoon and sea (see <http://www.cook-islands.com/openFrames.htm> Cook-Islands.com).
- ²⁶ This comment about the lack of media responsiveness or action is not unique to NGOs in the Cook Islands.
- ²⁷ No other NGO responded to requests for cost breakdowns for media content.



FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

BACKGROUND

The United Nations created the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) in 1947. Ponape (then including Kusaie), Truk, Yap, Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands together constituted the TTPI. The United States accepted the role of trustee, a role that involved the promotion of the economic advancement and self-sufficiency of the people living in the TTPI.

The US President appointed a high commissioner of the TTPI, and he, in turn, appointed an administrator for each of the districts mentioned above. The TTPI remained under the civil administration of the US Navy Department until 1951, when authority passed to the Department of the Interior. On 12 July 1978, following a constitutional convention, the people of four of the former districts of the Trust Territory, Truk (now Chuuk), Yap, Ponape (now Pohnpei) and Kusaie (now Kosrae) voted in a referendum to form a federation under the Constitution of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). United Nations observers certified this referendum as a legitimate act of self-determination.

In 1979, following the implementation of the FSM Constitution, the US recognised the establishment of the FSM national and state governments.¹ From 1979 to 1986 the US transferred governmental functions consistent with the terms and intent of the UN Trusteeship Agreement. The Compact of Free Association with the US was signed on 1 October 1982 and came into force on 3 November 1986. FSM became a member of the United Nations on 17 September 1991. Self-sufficiency, however, will take longer to develop, in part because private-sector growth had not been encouraged by the TTPI administration.²

In the year 2000 the total population of FSM was around 107,000, an increase of about 24,000 since the 1980 census. The State of Chuuk accounts for roughly half the total, with 53,500 people. Pohnpei's population is 34,500 people. The State of Yap has about 11,200 people and Kosrae has a population of about 7700.

Since the Compact of Free Association permits FSM citizens to enter the US freely, to maintain 'habitual residence' and to pursue education and employment, upwards of 15,000 Micronesians are currently living in the US — 7000 in Guam, 3000 in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and the rest in Hawaii or on the mainland. The number who actually emigrate to the US, however, remains relatively low as most FSM citizens eventually return to FSM.³

For this survey interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in the media, government and civil society in Pohnpei. In addition to this, interviews were also conducted with the operators of the government radio station in Kosrae and an independent newspaper in Yap. The survey period was December 2004, with two initial interviews completed in August 2004.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The FSM national government has a Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure, which is responsible for licensing radio and television stations, but not newspapers. There is no licensing of newspapers by the state other than normal business licences required of all private firms operating in each state. A government-established corporation, the FSM

Telecommunications Corporation, is responsible for all telecommunications including the telephone network, the internet and other services.

The relevant legislation is:

- FSM Code, Title 21: Telecommunications 1991. This includes radio licensing.
- Pohnpei State, Title 20, Public Broadcasting 2001.
- Kosrae State Regulation No. 60-02, Broadcast Authority Regulations 2002.

The legislation governing radio and television licences dates from the US Trust Territory administration. At that time there were only government-run AM radio stations and cable television stations. The advent of private FM stations is very new and there is no legislative provision for community radio or television.

According to the Assistant Secretary, FSM Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure, it is possible to get a licence for a new commercial radio station if everything is in place — the company plan, application files and so forth — in about one month.

There are no fees for licences (radio or television). Newspapers pay the normal business licence fees established by each state.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

The FSM Constitution provides for freedom of speech and freedom of media.

The Pohnpei State Constitution, Article 4, section 1, Freedom of Speech, also includes the right to receive information, as well as the following:

No government action may deny or impair the right of every person to speak, write, and publish freely on any subject and the right to receive information on all subjects. A person may be held responsible for untruthful statements injuring other persons without privilege, and for statements creating a clear and immediate danger of unlawful conduct or substantial injury to the public.

Neither the FSM nor the four states have FOI legislation.

1.3 Media regulation

The FSM Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure does not regulate media — it is only a licensing body. The Department's Assistant Secretary does conduct an annual survey to check whether the stations are maintaining their technical configurations and requirements. At the state level in Pohnpei, Title 20, Public Broadcasting section 1-21, tasks the Public Affairs Officer in the Governor's office with the responsibility for monitoring the government AM radio station V6AH to insure that it is meeting standards. In practice, unless someone complains, it is rarely done.

There are no censorship laws but the media content is expected to reflect what is allowable and decent by public standards.

While there is no explicit media regulation, the FSM government did take action against a newspaper. In the mid-1990s the only newspaper in the FSM, published in Pohnpei, was operated by a Canadian citizen. Called the *FSM News*, it was published monthly. It launched repeated and, some would say, relentless attacks on most officials in government. From a journalistic viewpoint, the newspaper has been described as partisan and lacking in balance. However, it was the only source of independent news in the FSM at a time when the governments, both national and local, were not used to releasing information or having their actions questioned in the media.

After about two years of publication the owner's visa had expired and the government deported her. As she was not an American citizen, which affords greater rights because of the reciprocal nature of the Compact of Free Association with the US, she had no legal ability to challenge the deportation. Since she was the sole force behind the newspaper, it was discontinued upon her departure.

1.4 Defamation

The national government's law on defamation and those of three of the states were not accessible. However, many of the laws from state to state are taken from national government legislation, with a few minor alterations. Therefore, the Kosrae State Code, which provides this definition of defamation, is instructive of the definition for the FSM:

Defamation is maliciously defaming by making a false statement either by writing, printing or by signs or pictures, or the like, or by an oral statement, whether or not it is communicated through or by radio or any mechanical or other means or device whatsoever, tending to blacken the memory of one who is dead, or to impeach the honesty, integrity, virtue or reputation of one who is living, or any educational, literary, social, fraternal, benevolent or religious corporation, association or organisation, and thereby exposing him to public hatred, contempt or ridicule. Words uttered in the proper discharge of an official duty, in a legislative or judicial proceeding, in an official proceeding authorized by law, are privileged and are not defamation within the meaning of this section.

As with US law, on which this is based, truth is an absolute defence.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are no local content requirements. The legislation for V6AH, the public broadcasting corporation in Pohnpei, does include the following general requirements:

1-102. Responsibilities and duties of the Corporation. The Corporation is vested with the following duties and responsibilities:

- (1) To provide audio and visual broadcasting services to the people of Pohnpei through the operation of a system of publicly owned broadcast stations and studios.*
- (2) To broadcast thereon public information, news, and programs of an educational, cultural, and entertaining nature.*
- (3) To develop audio and visual programs for use in Pohnpei and for sale or use abroad.*
- (4) To develop, in conjunction with the Pohnpei Department of Education, the College of Micronesia-FSM, and other educational agencies and institutions, instructional materials of an audio or visual format for use in the schools of Pohnpei.*
- (5) To develop, in conjunction with the Pohnpei Office of Economic Affairs, the Pohnpei Economic Development Authority, and the Division of Personnel, Labor and Manpower Development, instructional materials of an audio or visual format to enhance the technical, business, and professional skills of the manpower of Pohnpei.*
- (6) To develop, in conjunction with the Department of Health Services, instructional materials of an audio or visual format for the improvement of Health Services personnel and promotion of public health and hygiene among the people of Pohnpei.*

The Kosrae State Regulation No. 60-02, Broadcast Authority Regulations 2002, includes the same requirements for V6AJ, the public broadcasting corporation in that state.

With regard to community service requirements, the Pohnpei State Rules, Rates and Procedures (*Voice of Pohnpei*) for V6AH states that educational programs and public service announcements such as news, elections, vacancies and funeral announcements are exempt from fees or charges. 'The determination as to whether a program or announcement is exempt under this section shall be determined by the Assistant to the Governor.' (Section 3.3) This also applies to V6AJ in Kosrae.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

Pohnpei and Kosrae both have legislation in place that establishes V6AH and V6AJ as government-owned corporations. However, all the provisions of the law are yet to be implemented, and both stations are still largely dependent on government funding. The General Manager of V6AJ in Kosrae described the station as a semi-independent operation. 'If we could fund ourselves we would be independent. This would probably lead to more good governance issues being reported.'

The legislation establishes a board of directors to oversee the radio stations. The board is appointed by the Governor. The legislation does not require that the chair or members of the board be government employees; however, in practice, a majority of the members of these boards are government officials — a fact that reflects the employment dominance of the government in FSM. The board appoints the station director and the appointment is approved by the state government.

The station director reports directly to the board, and employees are hired by the corporation and are civil servants.

The Pohnpei State Rules, Rates and Procedures include guidelines for program categories, languages (Pohnpeian and English), length of the broadcast day and a general policy on the presentation and content of broadcast material:

Section 2.3 Types of Broadcasts and Programs

There shall be the following categories of broadcasts and programs: General announcements, news and public information programs, educational programs, entertainment programs, religious programs, political programs, advertisements and other paid announcements not covered by any of the other categories, and special situation programs not covered by any of the foregoing. The [Attorney-General] may, at his discretion, delete, add or modify these categories as the situation warrants.

Section 2.8 General Policy on Presentation and Content of Broadcast Material

The A/G reserves the right, at his sole discretion and for any reason, to reject any broadcast, or portion thereof, that he believes is not in the best interest of the public, the State Government or the Radio Station. The A/G may, at his discretion, limit the number, type, duration or frequency of any broadcast. Without limiting the foregoing, the following principles and guidelines shall apply.

- a. Broadcasts should be presented in a manner that is clear and understandable.*
- b. The content of broadcasts should be legal, decent, truthful and in good taste. It should not contain false, misleading, exaggerated, or deceitful statements.*
- c. Scandalous, pornographic, slanderous, treasonous, defamatory or derogatory statements will not be broadcasted.*
- d. Broadcasts may not:*
 - 1) Simulate the voices of real persons unless the written permission has been obtained from the person whose voice is simulated.*
 - 2) Contain any remark considered derogatory to law and order, adult authority, good morals or which contravenes Pohnpei or FSM laws.*
 - 3) Exploit children, or contain anything which might result in their physical, mental or moral harm.*
 - 4) Endorse, support or promote violence, treason, gambling, matters related to the occult or magic, or the abuse of drugs and alcoholic beverages.*

The Kosrae State Regulation No. 60-02, Broadcast Authority Regulations 2002, includes the same requirements for V6AJ. V6AJ's station board also has a say in how these requirements are interpreted:

We come up with a daily programming log and we have about five slots for news hour and then five slots for general programming, and then we also have public service announcements, time for some commercial messages and entertainment programs. If we would like to incorporate new programming then we have to bring it to the board and see if the local listeners would be benefited by this. (Station Director)

1.7 Government funding for media

The state government provides about US\$166,000 (approximately AU\$207,500)⁴ a year for the government radio station V6AH on Pohnpei. About US\$124,000 is for personnel and US\$32,000 for transmission costs. In addition to the government funds, V6AH collects revenue for its operating funds from fee-paying announcements and advertisements. The station generates US\$60,000–70,000 a year from this and the money stays with the station. As noted above, the plan is eventually to corporatise the station according to the law.

V6AH's Acting Commissioner⁵ said he would 'rather see the station totally privatised, because now we can't criticise the government'.

V6AJ Kosrae receives around US\$70,000 per year from the Kosrae state government, and is totally dependent on government funding.

2.**MEDIA SECTOR****2.1****Media outlets**

The FSM states have the following media.

Radio

There are four government-operated AM stations, one in each of the four states, and five private FM stations, four in Pohnpei and one in Chuuk.

- V6AH, Pohnpei: AM station owned and operated by Pohnpei state government.
- V6AJ, Kosrae: AM station owned and operated by Kosrae state government.
- V6AK, Chuuk: AM station owned and operated by Chuuk state government.
- V6AI, Yap: AM station owned and operated by Yap state government.
- V6AF, Pohnpei: Religious FM station owned and operated by the Independent Baptist Church. Its funds come from religious organisations that donate money to the Baptist stations in Majuro, Pohnpei and Chuuk. It is hoping to open stations in Yap and Kosrae soon and possibly Pingelap and Kapingamarangi (two outer atolls in Pohnpei State).
- 88.1 Pohnpei: Private FM station owned by Bernard's Enterprises (a local Pohnpei business).
- 89.9, Pohnpei: Private FM station owned by Herman Herman (a local businessman).
- V6CR, Pohnpei: Non-profit FM station owned and operated by College of Micronesia's Media Studies Program.
- V6BC, Chuuk: Private FM station owned by Thomas Phillip (a local businessman).

None of the FM stations, except for V6AF, the Baptist Church-operated station, produces or airs local news.

All the FM stations, except for V6AF, are funded partially through advertising and are subsidised by their owners.

Newspapers

There are four private newspapers, one in each state of the FSM.

- *Kaselehlie Press*, Pohnpei: Private, non-profit bi-weekly newspaper, owned by a group of Pohnpeians and Americans resident in Pohnpei. It is the longest-running private paper in the FSM (five years).
- *Yap Networker*, Yap: Private, non-profit bi-weekly newspaper, owned by Berna Gorong (a local businesswoman), who also owns a computer company Microtech. The newspaper is supported by its sister company, Microtech, which is a computer sales, service and maintenance company that also provides secretarial services.
- *Sinlaku Sun Times*, Kosrae: Private bi-weekly newspaper, owned by Equator Media Publications, a company operated by Olivier Wortel.
- *Chuukago Shark*, Chuuk: Private monthly newspaper owned by George Hauk.

The newspapers are funded through a combination of sales, advertising and subscriptions.

A new private newspaper, owned by Pohnpeian attorney Martin Jano, aimed to commence publication weekly in December 2004. The new paper plans to employ a Filipino journalist who has worked for papers in the Philippines for a number of years before coming to Pohnpei. Apparently many people have announced plans to publish regular newspapers in Micronesia during the past 30 years, but few have delivered, so this is a wait and see proposition.

Television

There are four cable stations, one in each of the four states.

- Island Cable Television (ICTV), Kosrae: Owned by Kosrae state government.
- ICTV, Pohnpei: Owned 50 per cent each by FSM Telecommunications Corporation and Bernard's Enterprises.
- ICTV, Chuuk: Owned by Transco, a family-owned business in Chuuk.
- ICTV, Yap: Owned by Yap state government.

None of the cable television stations produces or airs local news.

The stations are funded through monthly fees charged to subscribers on each island.

2.2 Program format of radio and television stations

The government-owned AM radio stations broadcast a combination of local, Pacific and Western music (rock and roll, country, R&B, and so forth), local, regional and international news, and special programs from government departments. When the state legislature is in session, they broadcast the sessions live. Most of the stations operate from 6 am to 12 midnight.

The private FM stations are largely music focused, with some international news feeds. As noted, most do not broadcast local news. V6AF, the Baptist station in Pohnpei combines religious music, religious programs (such as skits and dramas), children's programs and local and international news.

The cable television stations offer a standard, if limited, assortment of channels. These range from the Discovery and Nature Channels to US networks (CBS, ABC, NBC and Fox) and US sports broadcaster ESPN. In addition, they offer various 24-hour news channels, including CNN and the BBC. There are several music video channels and there is one local access channel that plays local videos, when available, and local advertisements.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The newspapers have a general focus, covering some political issues, as well as the environment, government and NGO activities, economic development, health, education and US–FSM relations under the Compact of Free Association. There is also local sports coverage, letters to the editor and news features provided by various government departments or NGOs on particular topics. The newspapers' focus is primarily local, with occasional Pacific or international news articles that have some relation to local issues of interest.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

Radio

The government-owned AM stations target a general audience, with broadcasts almost entirely in each state's local language, which increases listenership, particularly among older Micronesians. Each station also has powerful transmitters so their broadcasts reach the more remote outer islands in each state, as well as the main islands on which they are located.

The private FM stations are mostly targeting a youth audience with their 24-hour music formats and call-in dedication programs. They generally have a limited transmission reach and can be heard in parts of the main islands. Their broadcasts do not reach the outer islands.

FSM Telecom is planning to begin streaming audio broadcasts of all four government AM stations via its internet website in 2005. This will allow people with a computer and internet service to tune in to the radio stations. It will be of particular interest to the estimated 10,000 to 15,000 FSM citizens living abroad. In addition, the website is to include news from the different newspapers published on each of the islands, updated after each newspaper edition is published. None of the media currently has a website but the *Kaselehlie Press* is planning on developing one through the FSM Telecom website.

Newspapers

As the newspapers are largely published in English, they are read by people of high school age to late 50s. After this age, literacy in English declines. The newspapers are heavily distributed within their respective states, mostly in the urban areas. The *Yap Networker* reaches two of the main inhabited outer atolls (Woleai and Ulithi). The *Kaselehlie Press* is primarily distributed in Pohnpei but has expanded and sends a few papers to the three other states.

All the newspapers have a modest number of overseas subscriptions. For most of the outer islands the only source of news is from the government AM radio stations.

Television

Cable television programs are aimed at a general audience. The stations have a limited reach, and can only be received in urban areas on each of the four main islands.

2.5

Audience research

Some of the media have surveyed their audiences. Pohnpei State Title 20, Public Broadcasting section 10-121, states that V6AH is required to conduct a comprehensive audience survey not less than once a year. The station has produced questionnaires in the local language. The Acting Commissioner said, 'We ask people about the types of programs that they want to listen to, if the programs are suitable and so forth. But we haven't done this in a couple of years.' V6AH hired students to do the surveys.

V6AJ Kosrae randomly selects about 300 people every quarter or so, and staff interview them personally. 'But often we do this on a smaller scale daily,' said the Station Director, 'where people have time to call in and let us know what they like, what they don't like.'

V6AF does not conduct audience surveys. 'But when we went off the air,' through technical problems, explained the General Manager, 'we received phone calls immediately, so we know people are paying attention.'

Neither the *Kaselehlie Press* nor the *Yap Networker* have done audience surveys and lack the funds and staff to do them. The *Kaselehlie Press* has a column, 'Street Talk', where it asks people questions and gets their opinions. It also asks them what they want in the paper.

The media organisations have received the following feedback on news, current affairs and information interests.

- V6AH: 'About 70 per cent agreed with what we have, so we stayed with the programming.' (Acting Commissioner)
- V6AJ: 'They demand more — more specific information, more interesting entertainment programs and more contemporary music. Since we are the only radio station here, we have found that we need to be responsive to everyone on the island. They do want to know more on what is going on with the government. I find sometimes that information is very limited when we want to go into a department or follow up on government actions. I think ... I find it hard. We are fully funded by the government.' (Station Director)
- V6AF: 'We receive feedback on the news and analysis that Dave Arthurs [head of station for past 15 years; currently on medical leave in the US] reports, particularly on recent legislation in the FSM Congress to change tax rates. Dave explains the reason behind the tax increases and it upsets some of the senators. They call in and complain.' (General Manager)
- Kaselehlie Press*: 'Readers want more news about the government. It's hard to get.' (Managing Editor)

2.6

NGO and government access

As noted in Section 1.5, Local Content and Community Service Requirements, V6AH and V6AJ are required to broadcast a range of public interest content at no cost. For other content, the stations charge a flat fee of US\$3.00 for short announcements and, depending on the time of day, US\$10–20 for announcements, advertisements or programs of 5 minutes or less, US\$15–40 for those 15 minutes or less, and US\$30–60 for those 30 minutes or less. The rates are set by regulation, but sometimes they are reduced.

V6AJ Radio does not charge for public service announcements or public education programs — no matter where they come from, if they target everyone. It charges for certain announcements, like commercial messages. It also charges for public announcements that only concern a few of the residents, such as the Governor sending an announcement for 20 people to attend a meeting. On the other hand, fees are not charged for announcements in the broader public interest, such as a warning of a natural disaster.

We charge for outside broadcast services such as special sporting events and other programs that people and organisations want us to broadcast live. If someone brings us a tape of an interview that is an issue of interest to the whole island then we will broadcast it free of charge. We still would not charge for someone to use our recording facilities for an interview for an issue of interest to the whole island. Whatever is delivered by the Governor is news. Political campaigns and speeches for elections are also free. That is a law. This is also part of Title 7 of the Kosrae State Code. Political campaigns, funeral announcements and disasters are

all free of charge. The fees that we do and do not charge were developed as regulations two years ago. (Station Director)

V6AF said it is careful about what it broadcasts because it is church affiliated. In the past it has broadcast, at no charge, a radio program produced by the FSM Congress Public Information Officer (PIO), wrapping up the Congress session, and information provided by the Pohnpei government PIO. The station does not broadcast community announcements.

The *Kaselehlie Press's* Managing Editor said:

We look at what they provide. If it is good for a story we might have a reporter go out and get more information. If the agency wants to run it as an ad (publishing verbatim text), then we do it as an ad. Usually we give NGOs a discount. For example, the Conservation Society of Pohnpei provides articles for the Conservation Corner column and we put the articles in free. That's our contribution.

The *Yap Networker* charges a fee for announcements. For articles that are short press releases there is no fee and it is at the newspaper's discretion to use them or not. The Managing Editor said that 'if they require that we print it, they pay'.

2.7

Journalism resources

V6AH has one journalist, who is the News Director, writer and translator, with a Certificate in Journalism.

V6AJ has four journalists. The station requires its journalists to have completed at least two years in college, but none of the current staff has formal journalism qualifications. The station is working on new requirements for the education of journalism recruits. In 2003 two of the station's staff received government funding to enrol in communication courses at the College of Micronesia (COM). The Station Director said that staff could use more funding for education and training.⁶

V6AF's General Manager is also the station's journalist, but he does not have formal journalism qualifications, and is 'learning real quick ... it's all seat of the pants'.

The *Kaselehlie Press* has two journalists and an acting Managing Editor. The Managing Editor does her editing in her spare time. She is a full-time employee of the FSM Telecommunications Corporation. Neither of the two journalists has a background in journalism. One has a two-year degree in English from COM.

The *Yap Networker* has one full-time writer. Another contributes when time permits. High school level education is required. The owner of the newspaper produces each issue almost single-handedly because of her dedication to providing Yap with a local newspaper. She is attempting to secure a modest amount of seed funding that she hopes will put the paper on a firmer foundation, because the current situation is not sustainable in the long term. Her observations about the current situation and plans for the future point to areas where the newspaper needs additional support. She said:

I've submitted a proposal to a private sector development agency in hopes to obtain capital [seed money] to hire full-time staff and obtain proper printing equipment for the Networker. A lot of people that I've spoken with regarding how the paper is currently sustained say I'm totally crazy. It has some truth in it. But, the service that the news provides is greatly needed and appreciated by the people. With the current situation now, full-time mother of three, full-time paying job of managing Microtech, the news is often delayed in getting printed and distributed. Initially, people would be very upset because their paper is not available! But in speaking with our readers when they call in frustrated with looking for the Networker and explaining the circumstances, people are also very understanding and supportive. So instead of yelling 'Where's the paper?', they say, 'Okay, just make sure you continue and get out the next issue.' FSM Congress giving the US\$20,000 for equipment is a very positive first step for the paper. I know through perseverance the remaining needed support will come. My thinking is not to seek this seed money from our state or national government directly. I don't want the paper to be under the burden of having to show respect when it comes time to address critical issues, since the government is our main focus and target in Networker reporting. So the proposals we've been preparing are directed to outside entities.

With the exception of V6AJ Kosrae, where the two most senior journalists have more than five years experience, journalists at the other media have on average one to five years experience.

At V6AH the journalist receives around US\$12,000 per year (a reasonably senior level), while at V6AJ the salary is around US\$5000 per year. Journalists at the *Kaselehlie Press* are paid per story. A front-page story pays US\$50. Inside stories are US\$25 each; and US\$50 if the story is in-depth and with photos. The *Yap Networker* lacks the funds to pay its two journalists and both volunteer their services.

The government radio staff tend to stay in the job for long periods (for example, up to 20 years) as there are so few jobs in government. According to the *Kaselehlie Press* Managing Editor, the paper has a high turnover as it provides 'no benefit or health insurance', and the journalists are paid per story. The journalists leave to further their education or job opportunities.

Equipment resources

V6AH news staff have old computers, internet access (very expensive and therefore not used much) and tape recorders. V6AH would like the news department to have internet access continuously. The Acting Commissioner said:

I want to set up a system to bring in Radio Australia, BBC and so on to record news and then translate it. We bought a used satellite dish. I'm looking for funding to set it up. We also need separate phone lines for our reporter for local news. But we don't have it.

V6AJ has computers, internet access and hand-held recorders. The station does not use digital technology and cannot edit audio on a computer. V6AJ said while the equipment is adequate, the skills to use it effectively are lacking.

V6AF has micro-cassette recorders for interviews and computers to record news in digital form, then edit and broadcast news. The station does little live radio work and does not require extensive equipment.

The *Kaselehlie Press* has three computers, internet access and one digital camera. It also has a scanner and two laser printers. The paper is printed by the Good News Press (a private print shop operated by a religious group). The *Kaselehlie Press* said it needs another computer because while journalists are typing stories other staff are waiting around to do layout. They also need another digital camera so the two journalists can have one each.

The *Yap Networker* has a digital camera and micro-recorder. Microtech assists through the provision of computer and internet access and a phone/fax service. Printing of the paper is outsourced. The *Yap Networker's* equipment is more than five years old and often malfunctions. Proper software is needed for the layout of the paper and for the production of electronic issues for distribution.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

V6AH and V6AJ produce two news bulletins a day. V6AF produces three bulletins daily.

Neither V6AH nor V6AJ produce current affairs programs. V6AH's Acting Commissioner said it lacked trained people to do this. V6AF's General Manager said that the station did produce a current affairs show when Dave Arthurs (former head of station) was there, and he would like to continue this.

The news generally does not reflect the interests of people living in rural areas and outer islands because the media lack the resources for this.

V6AH would like someone who could go out to rural areas and/or outer islands to collect news. 'I'd like to have cell phones planted on each island to report in news,' said the Acting Commissioner. 'That way we'd get full coverage of outer islands.'

Only V6AJ said it covered rural interests, as 'the whole island is rural'. The Station Director explained further, 'We have no city or metropolitan area. We broadcast the interests of everyone here.'

The *Kaselehlie Press's* Managing Editor said, 'People coming in from the outer islands sometimes write a story about their visit and we'll use it. But most of the news is focused on Pohnpei.'

The Managing Editor of the *Yap Networker* added that, due to the lack of staff, the main content was the current affairs of the government. But readers outside the main island, from those islands that have internet access (Woleai and Ulithi), do submit letters to the editor.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

V6AH broadcasts three local news stories a day. According to the Acting Commissioner:

It's not enough. But with our resources and manpower [one journalist/editor] we can't collect more than that. We ask government agencies to provide news, but they don't provide much. There's no transparency in government. They won't release information.

V6AJ produces at least nine stories, most of which deal with government. V6AF's General Manager said the station produces only one or two stories daily as local news is not easy to generate. 'Some weeks there is a lot. Other weeks it's slow.'

Each issue of the *Kaselehlie Press* has about ten local news stories, mostly from Pohnpei, and some news stories from other states supplied by stringers. The *Yap Networker* publishes six to ten local stories each edition.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

V6AH's Acting Commissioner said its main governance priority areas were public health and education (as specified in its legislation). It would also like to cover how government runs, and where the money is going, for example, with the Compact of Free Association.

V6AJ focuses on health, education, economic and environmental issues of the island. The Station Director added that corruption is something that is beneficial to report on, but the station does not focus on this.

V6AF priorities are anything related to the FSM government and the freely associated states (including Marshall Islands and Palau). This includes legislative bills and amendments:

The FSM Congress's proposed amnesty bill [to forgive wrongdoing during the first Compact] was on the air for one week. As a result, the public hearings for this bill were packed with people — the most ever. Other issues [aired] include discussion of decisions from the state land board, which grants property title to leaseholders of public lands. This has upset local chiefs because it undermines their authority. (General Manager)

The Managing Editor of *Kaselehlie Press* said it did not have a 'particular focus on governance issues', while the *Yap Networker* cited financial accountability and economic development.

None of the media organisations has received donor funding and/or other funding to produce good governance content.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

V6AH uses a combination of press releases, interviews and the internet, PINA Nuis Online, PACNEWS and the BBC. V6AH also receives overseas news broadcasts from the cable television stations and puts these to air.

At V6AJ interviews and the internet are the primary techniques used, as well as news releases and other publications and newspapers.

V6AF uses press releases from the PIOs and they 'go out and scare up news'. Its journalist, and General Manager, explains: 'Basically, public information is privately controlled here. I get news two weeks before [the President's office PIO] sees it, or has authority to release it. Other sources include the state auditor's office.' The station also uses Voice of America (VOA), which is free because of the Compact relationship, Radio Australia, the BBC and RNZI. 'We like to keep a variety of news services so that we're not just an extension of the US embassy [using VOA].'

The *Kaselehlie Press* calls agencies and departments and 'asks them what's happening'. It also covers court cases. 'The FSM Attorney-General's office calls us to let us know what's happening in court. The offices are generally pretty helpful. Except for the Pohnpei state court. They won't give us public documents. We get them from the lawyers involved in the cases.' The regional news source is PINA Nuis Online. 'If it concerns the FSM government, we'll use it.' (Managing Editor)

The *Yap Networker* uses a combination of government reports, interviews with sources, press releases and the internet.

2.12 Media access to government content

At V6AH the Department of Education produces a weekly radio program, and the Governor's PIO provides regular news and information from various departments within the state government. However, while the PIO said this was daily, the Acting Commissioner said the contact was less

frequent. Other government offices occasionally broadcast special programs. Most of these are related to specific events or topics that they are promoting, in health or the environment, for example.

Most of the content at V6AJ comes from the government sector, particularly the Executive Branch, Health, Commerce and Education, but the station deals with all of the government agencies. At this point, NGOs do not provide a lot of content. The General Manager said this should be developed, 'as these organisations usually have greater community ties and involvement'.

V6AJ does live broadcasts of Regular and Special Sessions of the legislature almost every day. However, there has been some recent friction between the radio station and the state legislature. Although the legislature has been an active proponent of working with the media to put out information to the public, the radio station has asked that it be paid for the live broadcasting of the sessions. The legislature, on the grounds that it cannot afford to do so, has refused to pay for the service. This has resulted in some tensions between the two sectors. The sessions are mostly still broadcast live and whether or not the legislature should pay for the service is still not resolved.

At V6AF information is mainly from the PIOs.

The *Kaselehlie Press* gets press releases from the FSM President's office and the Governor's office for every issue of the paper. It runs them as is, or follows up and does its own stories. The press releases cover events and activities of the national and state governments.

The *Yap Networker* uses state legislature, the Department of Resources and Development, the FSM President's office and FSM Congress as the main sources of government content.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

V6AH's Acting Commissioner cited limited staff and the lack of transparency in government. 'We get most of our stories in English and have to translate them to Pohnpeian and need people who are capable of translating. We have only one person to write news and also translate.'

The Director of V6AJ said the main factor is staff. 'Sometimes when we are short of staff, it limits our ability to gather and air information.'

V6AF's General Manager believes that the station's capacity depends on his availability to produce news as well as run the station. 'I have several news sources that I talk with each week. You have to be aggressive and go get news here.'

The *Kaselehlie Press's* Managing Editor said staffing was the main constraint:

The reporters don't get enough stories. The two reporters may only do two to three stories each per issue. I tell them to get government releases and follow up to develop stories, but they don't always do it. I produce at least one story each issue.

The *Yap Networker's* Managing Editor said that news is determined by the available space and the number and size of advertisements.

2.14 Threats to funding

The media reported no instances of either government or corporate funding being withdrawn due to concerns with editorial content. The Acting Commissioner of V6AH added, 'We have to watch what we broadcast. The biggest problem is as long as we're under government control we won't have freedom of speech.'

2.15 Industry training

It is interesting to note that with the exception of one journalist from *Kaselehlie Press* who attended a training activity in Fiji, no other journalist has done any externally funded training. V6AH said it gives recruits a month of training with experienced staff when they commence, but the other media do not have similar in-house training.

The COM national campus in Pohnpei offers the only degree-based media-training program in the FSM. The college is a two-year community college, offering Associate of Arts or Sciences degrees.

The two-year degree program includes core liberal arts subjects and various media subjects. The Media Studies course subjects are: Introduction to Journalism, Introduction to Photography and Video, Film Studies, Introduction to Media Studies, Introduction to Broadcasting, Advanced Video, Interactive Multi-media Design, Computer Animation, Desktop Publishing and Media Studies Practicum. The subjects are one semester in length. The Media Studies program is only three years

old. The current head of the program, an American, is developing sustainability in the program by team-teaching courses with a local teacher so that the program continues when he leaves.

However, in 2003 less than five students were doing media as a major. There are more students in the Computer and Information Science program. There are 26 students in the computer animation program and 22 studying desktop publishing. The Director of Media Studies said, 'Students at COM receive little or no counselling about courses; many don't even know we have a Media Studies Program until their second year at the college. Media Studies is not well known.'

One of the instructors expanded on this:

The students haven't seen media as a realistic profession. A lot of people don't see the field as one with good opportunities to go into. We can get jobs for graduates. The people currently working in media jobs in the FSM have no training, no journalism background. It's still a beginning process. The students don't see the benefits of studying journalism; adults and politicians don't see it either.

In addition to this:

One of the challenges for Media Studies is that many of the students are from the outer islands. If they've seen TV, it's a videotape. They cannot tell the difference between advertisements and news. So there's no foundation to begin talking about communications and mass media. We have to explain about advertisers, that they want you to buy something.

There is also a widely held perception that you cannot make a living as a journalist. Yet the research indicated that the growing number of media in FSM 'are crying out for trained staff'.

COM does not have a broadcast station for teaching television but it did establish an FM radio station in 2004, which it hopes will assist develop the Media Studies program further.

In addition to this, an American student in the program in 2004 launched a new private FM station in Pohnpei, 89.9 FM. COM has demonstrated with both the college's station and the newer 89.9 FM that the equipment needed to operate an FM station can be purchased for as little as US\$2000. The Head of Media Studies notes that this start-up cost is more cost effective than a newspaper in terms of people reached. He estimates that 89.9 FM broadcasts can reach all of the 8000 residents of Kolonia Town (in Pohnpei); that number essentially doubles during the day as people come into town to work.

Graduates from the program have worked or are working at the *Kaselehlie Press* and another graduate is the PIO for the social security program. COM has also been asked to do staff development for PIOs in government offices.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

None of the media organisations has a formally designed code of ethics. The *Kaselehlie Press's* Managing Editor said, 'We tell them what we want, but there are no set rules;' and V6AH said, 'Not in writing. We follow a basic understanding of showing respect for custom and religion. But it needs to be written and followed.'

While the journalists interviewed were aware of the existence of defamation legislation, none of them had read this.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

There is no national media association for FSM, or any state-based media associations, and no formal industry self-regulation.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

- FM radio stations are relatively new to Micronesia, and this is reflected in the fact that the majority do not broadcast local news. Until recently, the perception was that establishing a radio station was an extremely costly and high-tech venture. But, as noted, the COM Media Studies Program in Pohnpei has demonstrated that a fully functional 60-watt FM broadcast station can be launched for as little as US\$2000.
- One of the problems with the government stations is that they operate largely as if they are still the only radio stations in the islands, as they were 20 years ago, with program formats that have not changed in years. As a result, they have lost a lot of listeners to the new FM stations, which tend to livelier and have music formats aimed at younger listeners. The government stations could benefit from technical assistance and training in overall radio programming, with

particular focus on how to create innovative news programs such as magazines and talkback programs.

- While the COM may in the long-term change the picture in the FSM regarding trained journalists, the fact is that at present there are few people trained to do the media work that they are doing, beyond rudimentary on-the-job training. Virtually everyone talked to highlighted the need for training in journalistic writing for radio and print media.
- The Head of Media Studies at COM believes that an initiative that would encourage Media Studies graduates to actually take up journalism as a profession is for graduates to receive a minimum stipend to assist with their start-up. For example, he said a graduate interested in getting into digital photography, to provide photographs to local or off-island media markets, has to purchase a camera and computer and have internet access — costs that essentially prevent a graduate from taking this type of initiative. Most media on Pohnpei, he said, cannot pay for new employees. But a stipend that was provided for a set period of training time would allow the graduates to get practical experience in the real world and develop their work, both with local market media and off-island outlets, such as Pacific Magazine (online edition), RNZI, Radio Australia and others.
- The latter recommendation is worth looking into, possibly in conjunction with local papers and private radio stations in the FSM states. There have been US-funded job training programs in the FSM, Palau and the Marshall Islands in the past that have occasionally been used for similar on-the-job training exposure. However, the current job-training program will go out of existence in the FSM and the Marshall Islands in 2005, ending that potential, if under-used, opportunity. Thus, a media job-experience scheme that provided for stipends for Media Studies graduates to work as trainee journalists, broadcasters and so forth at private sector media outlets — with the provision that after six months to one year, the media outlet would then hire the trainees — is worth consideration and review.
- Several of the government and private media operators or station managers highlighted the difficulty of getting access to supposedly ‘public’ information. The state court in Pohnpei, for example, will not release rulings and case filings to the *Kaselehlie Press*. This reflects a Pacific Island tradition of closely guarding knowledge and information, which traditionally and historically has been passed down from generation to generation through selected individuals who were considered worthy to receive the information.
- But the problem of lack of openness and transparency in the national and state governments is exacerbated by the lack of skills and resources on the part of the private news media. The *Kaselehlie Press* is a prime example. The Acting Managing Editor has another full-time job and is the layout and design person for the paper, holding the Managing Editor position temporarily while the paper attempts to recruit a new editor. The paper has two journalists who have no formal journalism training and have not received any structured on-the-job training. With direction, supervision and training, they could be producing many more stories and much higher quality news. Good management is the key to improving a paper such as the *Kaselehlie Press*. Although it is set up as a non-profit group, the paper needs a stronger business focus to increase revenue so that it can actually hire journalists, instead of paying them by the story. Business and financial management within the fledgling private press in Micronesia is another area that could benefit from training and technical assistance. While the *Kaselehlie Press* has been publishing for five years, making it the longest-running private paper in the FSM, the Chuuk and Kosrae papers started publishing in 2004, and the Yap paper is not much older.
- Another difficulty facing the newspapers is that the Pohnpei, Yap and Kosrae papers are all bi-weekly publications, while the Chuuk paper is published monthly. Experience suggests that a weekly publication is a more effective news tool, and that bi-weekly papers tend to be more a historical record than current news. This is another issue that could be effectively assessed and addressed through outside technical assistance. Clearly the improvement and expansion of the private press is a key element in the development of good governance in the country.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

The FSM Office of the President has a Department of Public Information, as does the FSM Congress. At the state level, each of the four states has a Public Information Office attached to the Governor's office.

The Public Information Officer (PIO) at the Office of the President is responsible for information flow for the FSM national government, with the exception of the FSM Congress, which employs its own PIO. The PIO at the Office of the President issues regular media releases on speeches, events and developments involving that office and other departments within the national government. The government radio stations generally use all of what is sent out.

According to the PIO at the President's office, 'This office is supposed to handle all national government media, but I see things going out directly from other offices, but not to me, and then when the media calls me for comment, I don't know about it.'

The FSM Congress PIO issues a brief summary daily of Congress sessions, and periodic press releases when Congress is not in session. The PIO also does radio programs to summarise each session. In addition to this, the FSM Congress Assistant PIO maintains a website (www.fsmcongress.fm), which contains information on members of Congress and legislation passed by recent sessions of the Congress.

The Pohnpei Governor's office PIO issues occasional press releases or provides verbal information to the government-run AM radio stations for broadcast. The PIO said he contacts the radio stations daily and the newspaper on a weekly basis. He said that he is tasked with educating people on what transpires between the Executive Branch of Pohnpei State Government and the State Legislature. The PIO is also responsible for disseminating information from the other departments within the Executive Branch, mostly concentrating on political issues. About 30 per cent of information issued by the Pohnpei state PIO relates to other agencies of the state government, such as the departments of Health Services, Agriculture, Marine Resources and so on.

In Kosrae the Governor's office PIO issues a regular two-page newsletter with news about the Governor's office and activities of other state departments.

The Department of Education is the only Pohnpei state government department that produces media on a weekly basis. According to V6AH station staff, the following departments/agencies produce media occasionally and not on any schedule, mostly related to events that they sponsor: the College of Micronesia Land Grant Program, Environmental Protection Agency, Mental Health (Substance Abuse), Primary Health Care/Public Health, Public Safety and Department of Land (all of the foregoing are government agencies or departments, or, like COM, are heavily funded by government).

3.2 Human resources

The President's office has five people working on media production; the FSM Congress has two; and the Pohnpei Governor's office has one officer.

The five officers in the President's office are the PIO, who is also the special assistant to the President, a graphic artist, assistant writer/graphic artist, webmaster and secretary. The positions of graphic artist and assistant writer/graphic artist were created when the office published the *National Union* (a monthly newsletter of the FSM national government that was discontinued in the early 1990s). There is some discussion about reviving this.

The FSM Congress has a PIO and an assistant PIO; the Pohnpei Governor's office has one PIO.

The Pohnpei Department of Education has one officer who produces media content but there is no formal position titled media officer. The officer started doing the weekly 30-minute radio show in 2004 at the request of the director of the Education Department. He had no previous experience in media prior to being handed the radio assignment.

3.3 Government media processes

In addition to the press releases and radio programs produced by government, websites are used to disseminate government information in the FSM. The President's office puts speeches, press releases and job announcements on the website, and the FSM Congress website has press releases,

public laws, bills and resolutions, committee reports, a history and chronology of the Congress and photos of the past and current FSM Congressmen.

The Pohnpei Governor's office has a website that is currently updated weekly. It contains mostly press releases and sometimes summaries of speeches, and also employment opportunities.

Hansard is available. The FSM Congress has also started posting this on the website for the last two Congresses. 'It saves us money because we don't have to print it out.'

The opening session of the FSM Congress is broadcast live on the government AM radio stations in each state (every two years). Pohnpei State Legislature sessions are broadcast by V6AH everyday when in session. These sittings are rarely broadcast on television (local access channel on cable TV). V6AJ also broadcasts the Kosrae State Legislature daily when in session.

3.4 Government department media content

Generally, the President's office issues at least one press release each week, though sometimes there will be a week with no releases and the following week there will be three or four. The press releases are for the general public. The website is for people with computers, such as students and business people, as well as FSM citizens living off-island. The media content is produced in English. Videos are not produced for news dissemination; the office films events and then makes copies of the events available to local television stations and individuals.

The FSM Congress press releases are mostly aimed at government workers, and educated people outside the FSM. The FSM PIO said that 'the radio stations sometimes use them, but they don't really take advantage of the releases'. He believes that the radio stations do not use all of the material that is provided from his office on a daily basis during the sessions.

The Pohnpei Governor's office PIO produces five or six press releases every day and does a live radio broadcast each morning via the state radio and the Baptist radio station. He also updates the website every week with press releases. The PIO said that everyone listens to the radio as illiteracy is high in Pohnpei, and people are more dependent on voice news than text. According to the PIO, the Governor wants every Pohnpeian to be aware of what is going on in their government. This is why the PIO often targets the people in the vernacular as this can easily be understood.

All press releases from the Pohnpei state departments (mostly from the Department of Health, Education, Environmental Protection Agency and the Legislature) are in the vernacular. The PIO translates them into English for written press releases and for the newspaper and the website, and reports on them in vernacular for the radio broadcasts.

The Pohnpei Department of Education's radio program targets parents. It aims to provide information to people who are interested in, and those who are helping, the department. The program is produced in the Pohnpeian language.

3.5 Media governance priorities

The President's office PIO said they disseminate information on what is happening. In the last couple of years, the negotiations on the amended Compact of Free Association have been a big issue.

For the FSM priority governance issues have been the Congress, tax issues, COM and the national budget and communications, particularly in relation to cost. The Pohnpei Governor's office said it disseminates information that deserves immediate public awareness but did not nominate specific issues.

3.6 Target audiences

As noted above, in Section 3.4, Government Department Media Content, the majority of government content targets a broad audience.

None of the PIOs or the Education Department does a formal assessment of the effectiveness of their media content. The Pohnpei Governor's Office PIO did say that 'we prefer to use the radio stations, the four government AM stations and the private FM stations', as they broadcast 'in the vernacular, so the older people can understand; the younger generation understands English'.

3.7 Qualifications and training

The President's PIO has a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication with a minor in journalism. The three other media staff each have a two-year college degree (none in media); the secretary has a high school diploma and some college education.

The FSM PIO and the assistant PIO do not have formal media qualifications, but they have qualifications in politics. The officers are expected to know about writing and public relations, and the assistant PIO has to maintain the website.

For Pohnpei Governor's office, the PIO usually needs to have a two- to four-year college degree, and some media experience, but this is not always required.

None of the PIOs has undertaken extensive media training on-the-job. The PIO in the President's office said staff had received website training run by a local computer company, and had done a course on writing. The PIO has also participated in two PINA-sponsored print media training activities off-island.

The FSM Congress PIO has trained in computer use, but has not done media-related training. The Pohnpei Governor's Office PIO has done one training workshop in news production.

The officer who performs the media duties at the Department of Education has received no media training to assist him with his work.

Government media training priorities listed by the officers were:

This office hinges on writing for press releases. We need training in basic journalism writing. Other training that would be useful includes training for secretaries to understand the role of the PIO and how to work with media — more awareness; update on video editing and filming; and training on maintaining/updating a website. (President's office PIO)

The FSM Congress PIO also said writing was the main priority. 'Also, we need training in producing radio programs and how to energise others. I feel frustrated listening to the radio station [V6AH, the government AM station]. It's really boring. They have no programs to make you sit up and say "I like that".'

The PIO from the Pohnpei Governor's office said, 'Writing is always a need — English writing and composition for press releases and such things.'

The Pohnpei Department of Education believes that training is needed to deliver effective radio programs and to use recording equipment.

3.8 Equipment

The President's office has computers with internet access, an audio-visual room for recording and editing videotapes, and cellphones for work in the field. It used to record radio programs, but now concentrates on providing the information in press releases and lets the state radio stations produce their own programs. The staff generally do not produce original video programs for rebroadcast. They film major events and then do basic editing and provide them for local cable access stations and/or individuals who are interested in obtaining copies.

The FSM Congress PIOs have computers with internet access, a digital camera and a video camera. There is no video editing equipment. For radio recording, the PIO goes to the Baptist radio station, V6AF, because the equipment is higher quality and easier to access than at the government station.

The Pohnpei Governor's office PIO has a small tape recorder, and has requested better equipment such as a mini-disk recorder in digital format. The PIO also has a computer and internet access. He does not have the equipment needed to edit audio and video. For his radio work he uses a hybrid phone system, which allows him to transmit live news or taped interviews and other broadcasts to the radio station.

The Pohnpei Department of Education PIO has a computer, but no recording equipment or studio. He uses the government radio station's recording equipment to produce the shows.

The PIO at the President's office said there is room for improvement with the equipment:

We're using old technology. We're looking to improve our recording studio with better lighting and sound equipment. We use what we have but it's not enough. Also, our website (www.fsmpio.fm) needs updating but we don't have current software and training for doing our own updates.

The FSM Congress PIO said the equipment was okay, 'but we could have better, more functional equipment'. The Pohnpei Governor's office PIO also felt the equipment was satisfactory but would like to have video recording and editing equipment to utilise the television more.

3.9

Government–media relationships

The views of the different PIOs on the government’s working relationship with the media vary. The President’s office PIO said the papers call the office for interviews and sometimes she calls them with tips and they get the details directly. The FSM Congress PIO talks to the radio stations to share ideas, and the papers either contact him or he calls them.

The Pohnpei Governor’s office PIO said he has a special relationship with almost all of the radio stations, as well as the only television station in Pohnpei — Island Cable Television (ICTV):

But to be frank with you, without me, the people would not know what is going on in our government. The Kaselehlie Press is not very proactive. In the past there were reporters who called to ask questions and write good stories. But I never see them anymore. You know it is their job to provide us with good stories and information and not to wait for someone to really feed them with news to reprint. I happen to find that they don’t come to me. But it would be nice if we could all work together. I work on producing news with the radio people all the time. But I will say that there is no doubt that my relationship with all of the media is very good.

The PIO suggested the following to further improve government–media relationships:

First of all, to really enhance the clear understanding and exchange of information throughout the government and the various media here in Pohnpei, for the benefit of the people of Pohnpei, I would suggest we need additional PIOs. I want to ultimately be able to appear on TV newscasts. At the same time, I want to put out my own newsletters on a weekly basis. I think to really enhance a good exchange of information from the government to the media, we should have a group of journalists get together regularly and set standards and work together in collaboration to really enhance the information system for the people. There are three branches of government and only the Judicial does not have a PIO. I think this is very needed. It should be mandatory for them to have their own PIO so that we can be informed on court matters and with happenings at the Judicial Branch, where we currently have a lot of misinformation. This step would really enhance public information and education.

3.10

Observations on government media capacity

Some general observations about government public relations and information flow in the FSM follow.

- The term ‘good governance’ is not widely understood. Most people asked about this for the survey believed it was to do with financial accounting and accountability, but even then there was little understanding about it. Possibly they have written statements about supporting the principles of good governance. But there is little promotion of good governance concepts. The public information offices are basically reporting on whatever is happening in government that someone wants coverage on.
- There is generally poor information flow in the FSM. V6AH claims that it is difficult to get state government departments to provide any information for news. This may also be partly a reflection of the skill and ability level of the journalists collecting the news.
- Government PIOs appear to be focused primarily on the government radio stations, largely as a result of ‘tradition’ and habit. For years, until the 1990s, the government radio stations in each state were the only media. Now, as noted, there are more private FM stations. It is clear that, as in the Marshall Islands, the FM stations have captured a significant percentage of the radio listening population, particularly youth, since their formats are more geared to appeal to the youth market. If governments want to disseminate information to their populations, they will need to make better use of these emerging opportunities among the FM stations. Also, they will need to begin producing shows that are more interesting and exciting to generate listenership — a key concern for private stations that are not required by government ownership to broadcast government department programs. This latter radio production need could definitely be a target for training programs.
- Almost everyone surveyed about training said that they needed training in writing. How to write press releases, news for broadcast, articles for newspapers, and so on. Both the President’s office PIO and the FSM Congress’s PIO have solid English writing skills. But they see the need for more training in this area for their other staff and have identified this as a significant weakness.

- The need for training and awareness building about the media and how to use it more effectively was identified as necessary for political leaders and director-level government officials to encourage them to use the media. Possibly programs that address awareness building about media for government officials could be helpful in breaking down some of the attitudes and traditions that prevent the open flow of information to the public.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

The current registration data on NGOs was not accessible. However, an independent survey of NGOs in the FSM by Saipan-based educator Elizabeth D. Rechebei, published in 1998, provides useful documentation and background information. The survey indicates that the majority of NGOs in the FSM are either women's or church groups. A number of the women's NGOs appear to be extensions of state governments. For example, several of the Women's Advisory Councils use the Governor's address in their respective states as their mailing address, or their boards are comprised of wives of top elected officials.

The NGO survey lists approximately 30 NGOs in the four states. Some of these, such as the Chuuk Women's Advisory Council (there are Women's Advisory Councils in each of the four states), are listed as umbrella groups. The Chuuk WAC says it represents 36 local NGOs, but it is doubtful that many of these are registered; most are small, local women's and church-based clubs.

In addition, there is the FSM Association of NGOs, which is a member of the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO), the FSM Women's Association Network, the FSM National Olympic Committee, Micronesian Conservation Trust, Micronesian Seminar, the Nature Conservancy and the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (a total of seven NGOs). These latter organisations are the only registered NGOs with a broader, development/governance-based agenda (perhaps with the exception of the National Olympic Committee, which is sports oriented).

Two NGOs in Pohnpei produce media content on a regular basis. They are the Micronesian Seminar and the Conservation Society of Pohnpei.

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

The Micronesian Seminar (MicSem)

This Jesuit-run organisation is the most active media producer of governance content in FSM. Its print, video and website content focuses on issues ranging from spouse abuse, suicide and family relations to current political and development issues, including analysis of various aspects of the Compact of Free Association with the US, corruption problems in FSM, and economic development opportunities in the country. MicSem often covers issues relating to Palau and the Marshall Islands, linking similar issues within this Micronesian sub-region. It maintains a website (www.micsem.org) that offers a multitude of downloadable photo albums and discussions papers, and forums on many topics; it publishes the *Micronesian Counselor*, a newsletter of 12 to 20 pages, approximately four times a year; it scripts, develops, shoots and edits its own original videos on many governance issues; it assists local NGOs to produce videos; and it provides material that local radio stations sometimes use to produce radio shows. It has begun developing 'information packages' that integrate video, print and web material related to the same governance topics. The website is averaging 1000 visitors daily. MicSem has also produced PowerPoint presentations that are used as part of an outreach program aimed to stimulate discussions about political and governance issues.

Since 1994, when MicSem produced its first video, it has produced 43 videos and is currently editing number 44. Videos are normally produced in English, but some of them are then produced with a local language version. MicSem occasionally produces radio shows, but since these are more effective in the vernacular — and given that there are more than 10 languages in the FSM — MicSem has not spent much time on radio.

MicSem's governance priorities are: social issues, health, education, domestic violence, drug and alcohol use, suicide and conservation. It was involved in an FSM economic review sponsored by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and produced a 30-minute video analysing FSM's economic situation and options for the future. In 2003 it produced a video for the Marshall Islands Compact

Office, examining the second Compact of Free Association in the context of what was in the first Compact.

In 2003–04 MicSem’s other governance projects included:

- A video on the changing nature of women’s work in Micronesia.
- A PowerPoint presentation and talk, with a video of 10 to 15 minutes, and the website entries on transparency and good governance issues related to FSM, Marshall Islands and Palau. The video and PowerPoint will be used in all four FSM states, Palau and the Marshall Islands for a series of presentations during April–May 2005. The short video focuses on the history of the three countries and Compact negotiations and presents broad questions. The PowerPoint is being developed with three audiences in mind: high school students, college students and a general audience. The presentation aims to evoke pride by showing the promise and hope displayed when these countries were first established. It will then present a series of comments and quotes to suggest that people do not have much control over their governments. This will be followed by discussions in local languages. ‘We want to get people to look at these things, get people thinking.’
- Three issues of the *Micronesian Counselor* will also focus on issues raised in the Transparency International National Integrity Survey on government conduct and accountability in FSM, Marshall Islands and Palau ‘to let people make their own conclusions’. (Director)

MicSem has also worked with the FSM PIO to make a video on the FSM constitutional convention, examining the pros and cons of the proposed amendments. According to MicSem it gave this to the government to review, but approval was granted only after a long delay. As a result of this experience, MicSem is not keen on working with government on more video projects.

The Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP)

This NGO is focused on governance issues relating to the environment in Pohnpei. It produces a quarterly newsletter, does irregular radio programs, recently produced its first video (in conjunction with MicSem), produces large posters for distribution, provides articles and columns to the bi-weekly *Kaselehlie Press* newspaper (Pohnpei) for every issue, and maintains a website (www.serehd.org). The website was developed with outside assistance and, as none of the staff has had training to update it, updates are rarely done. CSP also has a very active community outreach environmental education program that focuses on elementary schools and the community at large.

CSP’s Deputy Director said its media content reflects the organisation’s three major governance programs:

- The terrestrial program is focused on sakau, the Micronesian variant of the Polynesian kava, and clear-cutting in the highlands to grow it. The program is working with the community in an effort to get them to cultivate the lowlands instead of the watershed area and to take ownership of the public land to keep out the sakau farming. Pohnpei state officials have put in boundary markers according to a law passed recently that makes farming in the watershed area illegal but, until CSP’s involvement, these were largely ignored.
- The new invasive species/plants program focuses on educating the public about invasive species and working to eradicate them.
- The marine protected areas (MPAs) program monitors fish stocks and coral and involves the community in the monitoring process to increase ownership of the MPAs. It also works with the communities on management and enforcement of the MPAs, and alternatives to sponge farming.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

MicSem targets children and parents with its video dramas. ‘We use different faces in each drama we do in video because we want it to be a “down home” production with enough slapstick to keep kids interested, but a sound message for the parents.’ The video documentaries are pitched at people with English skills, at least at high school level and up.

MicSem has done two surveys to assess the reach of the videos:

In the first [done on Pohnpei] we found that more than 40 per cent of the population had seen two of five of our recent video shows. In Pohnpei, the TV station will play the videos twice a day for several weeks. Because there’s no TV station in Chuuk, we make multiple videos and pass them out [in the community]. We do the same in Kosrae and outer islands in

Yap. In Majuro, the number of people who viewed our videos was much lower. This may be because MBC [Majuro Cable Television] hasn't been broadcasting MicSem videos regularly. (Director)

CSP focuses on school-age children, youth and the community. It has not assessed its videos but it does surveys and pre- and post-testing of students during outreach visits.

4.4 NGO media capacity

MicSem has three officers involved in media production. At least one officer is full time during video production periods. The media duties include preparing scripts and storyboards, video shooting, lighting, audio recording, editing and mixing videos and radio programs, developing digital photo presentations that are posted on the website and writing articles for the *Micronesian Counselor*.

At CSP, the Deputy Director does most of the media work, with input from up to 10 other staff when they are producing the quarterly newsletter. Media duties include writing and translating copy for the newsletter or other publications, and layout and design using PageMaker and Photoshop.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

Neither MicSem nor CSP require formally trained media officers. CSP said for the program managers and up it aims for at least a two-year college degree and also looks for people with experience.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

MicSem officers have mostly trained on-the-job. The full-time video camera operator/editor was a teacher at COM before coming to MicSem.

MicSem has no immediate media training priorities, explaining, 'More effective for training would be to send a trainer to work with our operation to see how we can improve. Build our weak points, and develop capacity.'

CSP staff received three months of hands-on training with MicSem in video recording and editing as part of producing its conservation video. One officer also participated in a three-day workshop on Photoshop sponsored by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

CSP said it required more comprehensive training programs on specific software programs used for media development, for example, a basic-to-intermediate course on PageMaker and Photoshop. It would also like further training in video production as it believes television is a very popular medium.

4.7 NGO equipment for media production

MicSem has two video editing stations; six VCRs networked to dub multiple VHS tapes; two digital video cameras; a sound mixer and microphones; scanner; DVD burner; and internet access. One of the video editing stations is about six years old and one of the cameras does not work well. Maintenance is problematic because sending equipment off-island for repair takes three to four months. MicSem would like a faster editing system with a DVD drive and a new camera. Having two operational systems will allow it to use one for production and one for training other organisations.

CSP has one video camera that is currently broken; an underwater housing for a video camera and one for a digital camera; three digital cameras; several computers; one media computer; internet access; laser and inkjet printers. It has the ability to record radio programs, but currently does this at the radio station's studio.

CSP said it requires a new video camera, and updated computer software for editing and graphics:

We don't want to become a high-tech video editing operation. We need a middle ground that is better than just producing 'home' videos. We'd like to be able to do basic editing and titles. We also need better audio recording equipment to improve what we do for radio. (Deputy Director)

4.8 NGO media processes

MicSem does not need to purchase broadcast time for its videos. 'Local cable channels in each island are begging for local shows. That's one reason we went into video in the mid-1990s.'

CSP also does not pay for television time. It does pay V6AH for announcements and special programs and pays for announcements on the private radio station, 89.9 FM in peak times only. Announcements on the other private station, 88.1 FM and the *Kaselehlie Press* are free.

CSP's Deputy Director noted that recently the Micronesian Conservation Trust (a Pohnpei-based NGO) needed to do advertising in the newspapers in Palau, FSM and Marshall Islands. It was very hard just to get information on the costs of advertising from the local newspapers. 'We can use training to help us, but also it would help if each paper had up-to-date websites and email addresses that they actually check, with prices for advertisements.'

4.9 NGO community radio or television

Neither of the NGOs has explored running their own community radio or television station. The local TV access station already encourages video access and is, in this sense, a community station.

4.10 Funding to produce media content

MicSem has received donor funding to produce media content from the ADB (video); US government (video/PowerPoint on transparency issues); AusAID (funding for equipment); Canada Fund (video on spouse abuse); UNICEF (video). Generally, grants range from US\$3000 to US\$17,000.

CSP has received funds from the US National Marine Fisheries Foundation (video on conservation in Pohnpei); US Department of Interior (equipment); Canada Fund (PA system and video camera); AusAID (first year of Green Road Show outreach to elementary schools).

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

The Director of MicSem said:

Most NGOs can't do media. They don't have the creative energy. NGOs and government offices: most are hopeless. Any group that is doing media, we are happy to help. We can do skill sessions to toss around ideas, develop storyboards, and so forth. We can also provide technical skills and continuity. Although we can't count on people staying forever, they generally work here two to four years. Other officers, it's worse: they get trained and then leave to another job.

I don't think NGOs should bother with getting expensive equipment because there's not enough [for one group] to do. MicSem doesn't limit issues; we can move to any area. Conservation groups can't make three videos in one year on conservation because there are not enough issues and demand. We do five videos a year, all on different issues.

Other general observations about the NGO community in the FSM follow.

- As in the neighbouring Marshall Islands, the majority of FSM NGOs are basically clubs; many were originally established by women of high status (the wives of political leaders and so forth).
- The FSM stands out because it has several active conservation NGOs, the most active certainly being CSP and the Nature Conservancy.
- Few of the NGOs, with the exception of MicSem, have the capacity to use established media effectively and/or to their full effect (radio, television and print), although CSP produces regular media of its own (newsletters, posters). For most, coverage by the media is an afterthought, an add-on as time permits. Radio is especially underutilised, and new FM stations sprouting up (there are now three in Pohnpei alone) afford opportunities for reaching new, and particularly young, audiences.
- Part of the problem is simply lack of staff. Most organisations operate on a shoestring, with limited numbers of staff often attempting to do the work of three people each. If NGOs are to engage more effectively with the various media in the FSM, then it will be helpful for those who are active to gain training and understanding in how to prepare material (news, features and announcements) that is appropriately written for radio broadcasts or newspaper publication, since they have differing requirements. As video production is out of the realm of most NGOs, utilisation of MicSem's facilities and expertise — which also offers training opportunities — would be an option.
- MicSem is a major resource for the FSM, Palau and the Marshall Islands. It is making accessible information, photos, videos and discussion papers through its website and its grassroots network that is providing the public with important information about current governance

issues. Moreover, MicSem's presentations are relevant, thought provoking, interesting and engaging — a combination often not reflected by other NGOs or agencies producing media in the Micronesian region.

- Both MicSem in the FSM, and Mission Pacific in the Marshall Islands (which is dealt with in a later chapter), though they have somewhat different agendas, have also developed high-quality media production operations. Both have moved into an area where there was a huge vacuum. Historically, the island governments, primarily through their AM radio stations, were the pinnacle of technology in each of the islands, where people went to do studio recordings. But these facilities, being government run, have generally not been well maintained and have not kept pace with technology improvements. In addition, the advent of video, and now digital recording, has opened numerous new opportunities for media development. Both MicSem and Mission Pacific saw the opportunities available for using professional-quality productions to communicate key educational, developmental, health and other issues, and had the vision, staffing and organisational infrastructure to implement them. They also both understand that radio is no longer the only means of communication and appreciate the potential of video and websites. The diversity of media options and the best way to target audiences is often not well understood by NGOs, and MicSem and Mission Pacific provide examples of what is feasible in this area. Information on these options needs to be included in NGO media awareness training.

¹ Following this each of the four states developed its own Constitution.

² See <http://fsmgov.org/info/hist.html>

³ See <http://fsmgov.org/info/hist.html>

⁴ All currency in this chapter is in US dollars. US\$1.00 equals approximately AU\$1.25.

⁵ The Commissioner of Public Broadcasting is appointed by the board as per the legislation and is the equivalent to a general manager.

⁶ A locally based, US government-funded job-training program known as the Workforce Investment Act provides funding to government agencies, non-profit organisations and the private sector for specific job-training programs. The program, however, is being phased out in 2005 as the funding is being provided to the FSM Department of Education, and it is unclear at this point whether access to this type of job-training funding support will continue.

FIJI ISLANDS

BACKGROUND

The Fiji Islands consists of 322 islands, approximately, one-third of which are inhabited. The population is around 800,000. The major languages are Fijian, Hindustani and English. Since independence in 1970 Fiji's system of government has been a constitutional democracy, based on the Westminster model. Fiji has a bicameral Parliament consisting of a nominated Senate with 32 members and an elected House of Representatives with 71 members, and a Cabinet presided over by a Prime Minister. There are 22 ministries.

Fiji is divided into 14 provinces, which are themselves composed of smaller administrative units, the basic one being the village (koro). At the head of a village is the turaga-ni-koro, elected or appointed by the villagers. Several koro form a district (tikina) and several tikina make up a province (yasana). Each province is governed by a council with an executive head (Roko Tui) whose appointment has to be approved by the Fijian Affairs Board, which must also approve all rates and by-laws applied by the provincial council. The Fijian Affairs Board is regarded as the guardian of the Fijian administrative system and many other aspects of Fijian custom.

Indigenous Fijian concerns are taken into account through the Bose Levu Vakaturaga (Great Council of Chiefs). This is the highest assembly of traditional chiefs of Fiji and meets at least once a year. It consists of 55 members nominated by the 14 provinces. The Council appoints the President of Fiji — a power embodied in the 1997 Constitution.

In 1987 the democratic rule of Fiji was interrupted by a military coup led by then Lieutenant Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka. A four-month interim rule by the Governor-General ended with a second coup by Rabuka on 25 September 1987. Rabuka abrogated the 1970 Constitution and declared Fiji a republic. A short period of military government, and two subsequent interim administrations, followed and a new Constitution was promulgated on 25 July 1990 with elections held in May 1992.

The Constitution is the supreme law of Fiji. The 1990 Constitution was changed in 1997 with the *Constitution Amendment Act*. In principle, the new Constitution gave regard to recognising, respecting and upholding the rights and interests of all ethnic groups in the country. The passing of the new Constitution led to Fiji's readmission to the Commonwealth in October 1997.

Fiji suffered another period of political, social and economic instability from 19 May 2000, when a group led by George Speight seized control of the Parliament and took hostage the then Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry and members of his government, holding them for 56 days. The hostage-taking was followed by the purported abrogation of the 1997 Constitution, the departure of then President Mara and the installation of three successive unelected interim administrations. Rulings by the Fiji High Court and Court of Appeal that the 1997 Constitution remained the supreme law of the land led to the general election in late August 2001 and Fiji's subsequent return to parliamentary democracy under the Prime Ministership of Laisenia Qarase, who had led the caretaker and interim governments.

The political crisis of 2000 saw the Fiji economy decline by 2.8 per cent in that year. This contraction was accompanied by substantial job losses and migration of skilled and professional workers, the latter trend declining but persisting to the present.¹

1.

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1

Media and communications legislation

The Ministry of Information, Communications and Media Relations (MICMR) is responsible for media policy and legislation, public service broadcasting, media relations and monitoring, telecommunications legislation and oversight, ICT development, the Fiji government website and maintenance, and the National Archives of Fiji. Located within the MICMR are the Policy and Administration Division, the Department of Communications, an Information Services Division and the National Archives. The Policy and Administration Division provides policy advice and support for the Minister, and is responsible for the review of media legislation, the provision of public service broadcasting and broadcast sector development. The Department of Communications is responsible for telecommunications policy and legislative development and broadcast licensing (technical aspects); and Information Services produces radio and television programs, print media articles and maintains the government website, <http://www.fiji.gov.fj/>.

The MICMR Corporate Plan 2004 states that its vision is for 'a well-informed, connected and united Fiji'. It says its mission is to:

Build a united Fiji through the provision of information, communications and archival services, and the development of strong media partnerships thereby promoting:

- *media freedom and active media and public participation in nation building;*
- *economic growth through developments in telecommunications, ICT, postal services and the television industry;*
- *active citizenship, democracy and community life through information dissemination and study of archival records.²*

The list of legislation of relevance to the media sector is:

- *Public Service Act 1999*
- *Financial Management Act*
- *Television Decree, 1992*
- *Press Correction Act 1949*
- *Public Records Act*
- *Broadcasting Commission Act 1953*
- *Defamation Act 1971*
- *Officials Secrets Act*
- *Post and Telecommunications Decree 1989*
- *Fair Trading Decree 1992*
- *Newspaper Registration Act (Cap 106) (enacted on 1 June 1895 and amended in 1931, 1966 and 1971)*
- *Draft Media Bill 2003*
- *Draft Telecommunications Bill 2004 to replace the Post and Telecommunications Decree 1989*
- *Draft Broadcasting Bill 2005*

In 1996 the Fiji government invited two British consultants from the Thomson Foundation to review its media legislation and make recommendations to update it. This resulted in a report titled *Future Media Legislation and Regulation for the Republic of Fiji Islands*, referred to as the Thomson Report. The Thomson Report listed a number of key issues with the current legislative and regulatory arrangements that it felt required resolution through legislation, through other regulatory mechanisms or through programs of action within the media industries:

- Registration of media outlets
- Licensing of media outlets
- Licence award procedures
- Licence compliance procedures

- Statutory regulation of media practice
- Non-statutory regulation of media practice
- Film and video regulation
- Legal constraints on disclosure of information
- Foreign and cross ownership of media outlets
- Professional standards and training in the media
- Enhancing the provision of local television programming
- Prospects of alternative television outlets
- Television licence fees³

In response to the Thomson Report's recommendations, the Fiji government engaged another two British consultants in 2004 to develop a Broadcasting Bill. This Bill (when introduced) will replace the outdated *Broadcasting Commission Act 1953* (which established the national public broadcasting service, the Fiji Broadcasting Commission) and the *Television Decree 1992*. Neither of these Acts reflects the new technological environment in which the media operate, nor the current diversity of media in Fiji. The Broadcasting Bill will include narrowcasting, community media and public service broadcasting (PSB). While community licences (radio and television) have been allocated, there is no specific legislative provision for them. Currently, one community radio station is paying the same annual licence fee as a commercial radio and/or television station FJ\$1000 (AU\$777)⁴ as a result of this. The community station, which operates part time, pays an additional FJ\$100 plus taxes (total FJ\$237.50) as an annual spectrum fee, compared with the FJ\$1300 paid annually by commercial radio or television.⁵ In 2001 Community Television Nadi (CTV) complained about its annual fee, which it said was the same fee paid by commercial television.⁶

In addition to the Broadcasting Bill, there is a draft Telecommunications Bill. This will establish a Telecommunications Authority, and subsume the role currently played by the Telecommunications Regulatory Unit in the Department of Communications.

The *Newspaper Registration Act* (Cap 106) was enacted in June 1895 and amended in 1931, 1966 and 1971. Newspapers need to be registered (not licensed) so 'members of the public should readily be able to identify those who own a newspaper and those responsible for its publication'. (Deputy-Secretary, MICMR)

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

The Fijian Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of the press and other media, and 'a freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas'. Following the inclusion of this latter guarantee in the Constitution (in 1997), draft freedom of information (FOI) legislation has been developed but it is yet to be enacted.⁷ FOI legislation would require either the repealing of or amendment to the current *Official Secrets Act*, which is based on colonial British legislation. Freedom of information is not the responsibility of the Minister of Information; it is the responsibility of the Attorney-General.

The Fiji Media Council supports the proposed FOI legislation. The Chair said:

They gave us a draft of this Bill about six years ago, which is when it first came out, and we gave the government our views on it. We firmly believe in this Bill because it will give public access to government information, information they say is confidential, and it will give the media organisations themselves access to information, which they feel they should report on. So yes, I believe it is necessary and I hope they move on it quickly.

As part of the development of FOI legislation, the Thomson Report proposed repealing the *Official Secrets Act*, which enables the government to suppress a considerable amount of information, and the *Press Corrections Act*, which empowers the government to force the media to publish what it considers as correct versions of reports. The latter legislation has rarely been used.

1.3 Media regulation

In response to the Thomson Report, the Fiji government drafted a Media Bill, which contained the legal framework to establish a Media Council and code of ethics for the media, and related matters. The Bill proposed that government appoint the Chair and members of the Council. It was released for public discussion in 2003 and there was considerable opposition to it from the media

industry and the civil society sector. The current Chair of the Fiji Media Council summed this up when he said that the Council's position is that there is no need for legislation that would impose or give the government some influence over the media organisations:

That is not to say that the government should not be involved in some way in a consultative fashion like they are going to be as a member of the Fiji Media Council. But we don't believe it would be right for the government to appoint public members to the Council or to appoint the chairman because it would give them control over the Council.⁸

The draft Media Bill has since been modified to account for and reflect issues arising from the consultations. It is not clear whether it will be reintroduced and/or subsumed in the proposed Broadcasting Bill.

The draft Broadcasting Bill is due to be introduced into Parliament later in 2005. It includes program and advertising codes (based on those developed by the Fiji Media Council), and establishes a Broadcast Standards Authority. The Authority will allocate licences and monitor licence conditions. The Deputy-Secretary of the MIMCR explained the aim of the new Broadcasting Bill:

As far as the broadcasting sector is concerned, this new legislation is going to help in the management and administration. There's a lot of loop holes — issuing of licences, no system, anyone who wants to come in and set up a TV station they can just walk through the door; with this new system it will be managed — we have to issue licenses for about seven years, to allow people to get their money back, seven years — system of renewals, public tender for new application for stations, it'll be really systematic.

At the time of the survey the Bill was being drafted and further details were not available.

Currently, the Deputy-Secretary for Communications heads the Telecommunications Regulatory Unit of the Department of Communications and this unit is responsible for broadcasting licences, regulations and handling other telecommunications issues such as information and communications technology (ICT) development and internet provisions. The Thomson Report noted that under the Fiji broadcast licensing system, licences are awarded to grant operating rights to specified frequencies and transmitter locations. They do not contain specific program service requirements, and it is up to the licensee to decide what use to make of the allocated frequencies. It is a generally deregulated framework.⁹ The proposed Broadcasting Bill will address this with the inclusion of content guidelines and codes of practice.

1.4

Defamation

The *Defamation Act 1971* broadly follows the traditional UK approach. It alters some parts of common law defamation (such as the actions for libel and slander) but it does not replace them entirely. Thus the definition of what is defamatory is the same as in English law; that is, anything that an ordinary person would think would harm the reputation of the plaintiff, that makes you think worse of someone and that would lower them in your estimation.

According to the *Defamation Act*:

Slander affecting official, professional or business reputation

10. *In an action for slander in respect of words calculated to disparage the plaintiff in any office, profession, calling, trade or business held or carried on by him at the time of the publication, it shall not be necessary to allege or prove special damage, whether or not the words are spoken of the plaintiff in the way of his office, profession, calling, trade or business.*

Slander of title, etc.

11. (1) *In an action for slander of title, slander of goods or other malicious falsehood, it shall not be necessary to allege or prove special damage —*
- (a) *if the words upon which the action is founded are calculated to cause pecuniary damage to the plaintiff and are published in writing or other permanent form; or*
- (b) *if the said words are calculated to cause pecuniary damage to the plaintiff in respect of any office, profession, calling, trade or business held or carried on by him at the time of the publication.*

Justification

15. *In an action for defamation in respect of words containing two or more distinct charges against the plaintiff, a defence of justification shall not fail by reason only that the truth of every charge is not*

proved if the words not proved to be true do not materially injure the plaintiff's reputation having regard to the truth of the remaining charges.

Fair comment

16. *In an action for defamation in respect of words consisting partly of allegations of fact and partly of expression of opinion, a defence of fair comment shall not fail by reason only that the truth of every allegation of fact is not proved if the expression of opinion is fair comment having regard to such of the facts alleged or referred to in the words complained of as are proved.*

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

Fiji Television Limited's licence requires it to broadcast only 10 per cent local content. The Thomson Report expressed 'some surprise at the limited range of local programming' on Fiji TV.¹⁰ There do not appear to be any specific local content requirements for commercial radio broadcasters, and the *Broadcasting Commission Act 1953* contains very little information on content for public service broadcasting. The government contract with the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited (FBCL) for the provision of PSB on the FBCL does contain more detail and this is discussed in the sections below.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The FBCL is Fiji's national radio broadcasting service. Both Fiji and PNG have long radio broadcasting histories, with the first government information radio station commencing in 1935 in Fiji, two years after the first station in PNG. The Fiji Broadcasting Commission's first program was broadcast on 1 July 1954.

In January 1998 the FBC was corporatised as part of the government's public sector reform program and renamed Island Networks Corporation Limited. In June 1999 a change in government led to another change in name, this time to the FBCL.

The FBCL is a statutory government organisation and consists of two PSB stations and four commercial stations. The Minister of Public Enterprise appoints the Board after consultation with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Information, then the names go to the Prime Minister's office for endorsement. The Board appoints three people, the CEO, the Director of Finance and the Director of Sales. The CEO appoints the staff.

The Deputy-Secretary of the MICMR said that when public service funding was provided for non-economic and non-viable programs on the FBC, little thought was given to the wider definitions of public service broadcasting. MICMR says PSB content is designed to improve the national quality of life and provide for the information needs of indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian populations in Fiji's most isolated and rural areas. Radio is the choice of medium because of its reach and accessibility.¹¹

The Thomson Report recommended that PSB funding be 'ring-fenced' to include the two FBCL stations, Radio Fiji One and Two, and put out to tender. The first PSB contract was awarded to the FBCL as part of the corporatisation process. The PSB services were tendered again in 2003. The PSB contract for the Hindustani service was awarded to Communications Fiji Limited (CFL) for 2004 to 2006, and the FBCL won the Fijian PSB service. The FBCL mounted a legal challenge to the decision of the Major Tenders Board, and the FBCL Hindustani service continued on a temporary contract. Meanwhile CFL's PSB station, Radio Sargam, commenced broadcasting in April 2004. On 17 January 2005 the Suva High Court quashed the decision to award CFL sole rights to the PSB Hindustani service and ordered the Major Tenders Board to call for new tenders for both PSB contracts.¹²

Under the current contract the government has with the FBCL and CFL, it buys airtime for the PSB content and contributes toward the operation of the stations. Advertising revenue supplements the operating costs of the stations. The PSB contract stipulates that advertising will not be broadcast during prime time.

The FBCL's PSB contract states that:

The objective of public service broadcasting is to inform, educate and entertain the public, and in broad terms shall include –

- *National development management and leadership*
- *National and cultural heritage protection and promotion*
- *Special social and community obligations including emergency services*

- *Indiscriminate access to the entire populace with national and regional coverage.*¹³

Programs that are funded as part of the PBS contract include: weather bulletins, news and current affairs, national emergencies, disaster awareness messages, disaster warnings, national emergency messages, law and order messages, health and safety messages, religious programs, family programs, language programs, cross-cultural learning, local artists, community messages and funeral notices.

The PSB Unit in the MICMR has one officer who is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the PSB contract. This consists of quarterly monitoring reports on contract compliance; policy and management meetings between the Ministry of Public Sector Reform, the PSB providers, and Ministry of Finance; and a twice-yearly evaluation of listenership, especially in vernacular transmission.

1.7 Government funding for media

The government provides a total of FJ\$1.3m for the PSB contract for FBCL stations Radio Fiji One and Two and CFL's Radio Sargam. The FBCL allocation is confidential, but the CFL allocation is FJ\$484,000 VIP (VAT-inclusive price). The Ministry of Information is allocated FJ\$40,000 from this budget to monitor compliance with the contract requirements.

The CEO of FBCL said:

For Government, giving FJ\$1.3million and saying that is PSB I do not believe it is sufficient. You know how expensive it is to create local programs, quality radio programs. There needs to be a pool of funds available be it Fiji Government or whoever where locals, NGOs or individuals or whatever who have good program ideas could actually tap into and produce these programs. And then onward sell it or pass it on to the media organisations. At the end of the day for example we have a lot of people wanting to give us their programs but it is important to have quality content.

The Fiji government also allocated FJ\$50,000 for government advertising, including paid print articles for newspaper supplements and the government holds shares in the *Daily Post* and Fiji Television Limited through Yasana Holdings.¹⁴

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

Radio

- FBCL operates a network of six radio stations, two each in each of the three major languages: Radio Fiji One (Fijian), Radio Fiji Two (Hindustani), Radio Mirchi (Hindustani), Naba Dua Ena Sere FM (Fijian), Radio Fiji Gold (English), and 2Day FM (English). The FBCL publishes its broadcast news online and is also exploring the feasibility of establishing public service television. The FBCL is a government-owned statutory company.
- CFL operates five radio stations: FM96 (English), Navtarang (Hindustani), Viti FM (Fijian), Legend FM (English) and Radio Sargam (Hindustani), and a subscription website. Communications Fiji Limited (CFL) is a locally owned and managed company, both in Fiji and PNG. CFL has a subscription-based website, Fijivillage.com, which contains news, music and sport. The news bulletins online include the audio. CFL has developed a staff share-ownership scheme and profit sharing. Currently over 95 per cent of staff own shares in CFL.¹⁵
- ZFM 100 is a commercial music station, based in Lautoka, which broadcasts in English. It rebroadcasts RNZI's news. Current transmission covers the Western division (except the coral coast) and also a major portion of the Central/Eastern division on Viti Levu only. The station is owned by XJ6 Co Ltd, which also owns ZFM 100 in Honiara, Solomon Islands.
- Hope FM is a Christian radio station broadcasting contemporary Christian, Indian and Fijian music with local news on Church matters, health and lifestyle, humanitarian aid, education and social issues. It is operated by the Seventh Day Adventist Church.
- Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), a US-based Christian network, runs FM97 Harvest Radio and broadcasts Christian media programming with no local news production.

- FemTALK 89.2FM, is a mobile community radio operated by the NGO fem'LINKpacific. This broadcasts on a part-time basis and airs programs produced by women on a range of women's issues. The station is discussed in more detail in Section 4, Civil Society Sector.

Newspapers

- Fiji Times Limited publishes the *Fiji Times* (Monday to Saturday) in English, the *Sunday Times* (Sunday), *Na Lalakai* (weekly Fijian newspaper), *Shanti Dutt* (weekly Hindustani newspaper), *Kaila!* (weekly youth newspaper), *Shanti Dutt Diwali Annual* (yearly special edition for Hindu festival Diwali) and Fiji Times online (daily). The Fiji Times Limited is owned by News Corporation. The *Fiji Times* has an estimated circulation Monday to Friday of 24,000 and its Saturday circulation figures are 40,000. Copies of *Kaila!* are sponsored to rural schools.
- Sun Fiji produces a daily newspaper in English called the *Fiji Sun* and a Fijian paper, *Na Sigavou*, which is a four-page insert in the *Fiji Sun*. Both papers are published Monday to Saturday. It also produces the *Sunday Sun* (Sunday). The majority shareholder is C.J. Patel Ltd with other shareholders including Fijian Holdings Ltd (financial investment company), Vinod Patel Ltd and Ba Provincial Holdings Ltd (Ba is one of the 14 provinces in Fiji). It is 100 per cent locally owned. Sun Fiji has an online news site: <http://www.sun.com.fj>. The *Fiji Sun* Monday to Friday circulation is 10,000, and the Saturday and Sunday editions have a circulation of 13,000 readers.
- Fiji Daily Post produces three newspapers. The *Daily Post* is published six days a week (Monday to Saturday) in English, *Nai Volasiga*, a weekly newspaper in Fijian, and the *Chinese Mail*, in Chinese, which comes out three times a week. At the time of the survey, the Fiji government was the major shareholder (44 per cent).¹⁶ The *Daily Post* is self-funded from sales and advertising and is currently experiencing financial difficulties. The *Daily Post* does not publish its news online. It used to have an arrangement with Fijilive, but this has ceased. The *Daily Post's* circulation is estimated to be 3000 copies a day.
- Associated Media publishes the *Review* (fortnightly business newspaper) and *Fiji Magic* (quarterly tourist newspaper) in English and an online news service
- Islands Business International (IBI) produces two magazines: *Fiji Islands Business* (monthly business magazine for Fiji) and *Islands Business* (monthly regional business magazine for Pacific Islands). Both are published in English. It also produces industry-specific publications. IBI publishes only in English. IBI has a website, <http://www.islandsbusiness.com>, where it publishes news.

Online news services

- Fijilive.com is an English-language online news service owned by the Review Group/Associated Media Ltd (<http://www.fijilive.com/>). It is funded by online banner advertising and website services (website creation and hosting).
- PACNEWS is a regional online news service now owned and operated by PINA. It publishes in English.

Television

- Fiji Television Limited operates the national free-to-air television station, Fiji One TV, which broadcasts mainly in English, but has some Fijian and Hindustani content, and three pay television channels, SKY Plus (English), SKY Entertainment (Hindustani), and SKY Sports. It publishes its top stories, one or two sports stories, the weather and the business for the day online (Monday to Friday). At the time of the survey SKY Pacific, a new 12-channel direct-to-home service for Fiji and other Pacific countries, was about to be launched. This will include SKY Entertainment, Fiji One TV, the Cartoon Network, ABC Asia Pacific, CNN, Turner Classic Movies, MTV and Nickelodeon. Fiji Television Limited has also been exploring the feasibility of introducing public service television. Yasana Holdings, the commercial arm of the 14 provinces in Fiji, owns 51 per cent of the company, and the Fiji government has 14 per cent of the shares, but no representation on the Board of Directors. The remaining shares are held by a range of shareholders.
- TBN operates US Christian television via satellite.

The Fiji government is currently reviewing four licence applications for new television stations (free-to-air and pay television).

2.2

Radio and television program formats

The FBCL's Radio Fiji One and Radio Fiji Two stations have PSB formats with programs produced by NGOs, government departments, and FBCL producers on a range of development issues, community messages, talkback programs and coverage of meetings of the Great Council of Chiefs and Parliament. The FBCL's four commercial stations feature music and news, and some information programs and talkback.

2Day FM is targeting young, hip and trendy audiences under 25 years old with an alternative radio station to air their views, request their songs and participate in discussions on issues that affect them. The FBCL says the station aims to develop a responsible and informed youth that can contribute positively to national development and the overall welfare of society.¹⁷

Radio Mirchi describes itself as 'the Rhythm of India'. It features the latest music hits, hourly news and sports, and a line-up of popular personalities and targets audiences 25–40 years old. Radio Fiji Gold has a blend of music, entertainment information and lifestyle shows, and news for audiences 18–45 years old. The format is easy-listening music from the 1970s, '80s, '90s and today, with longer format news for audiences. Naba Dua Ena Sere FM has an easy-listening music format, with longer in-depth news, current affairs, sports programs and entertainment aimed at audiences 18 to 45 years old.

CFL's five commercial music radio stations also target different age groups and language groups. FM96 broadcasts the latest hits, news and information and entertainment for young audiences in urban areas, 15–25 years. Legend plays the hits of the 1970s, '80s and '90s, as well as current releases, and features more mature presenters and news content for a 25–40-year-old audience. Viti FM has a format of personalities, music, news, sports and talkback radio aimed at 25–45-year-old Fijian-speaking audiences. Navtarang targets young Hindustani-speaking audiences, 18–35 years, with radio personalities, music, talkback and news. CFL also operates the PSB station Radio Sargam, which is formatted as a community station, with news and talk programs for Hindustani-speaking audiences.

Fiji One TV contains a mix of local and overseas programs, news, current affairs, entertainment and sport.

2.3

Focus of newspapers

The Fiji Times Limited newspapers, with the exception of *Kaila!*, focus mainly on local news and sport. The *Fiji Times* and the *Sunday Times* also have two pages of business news and at least four of world news and two regional news pages.

The *Daily Post* wants to give its readers something different to the *Fiji Times* and *Fiji Sun* in terms of layout style, font size, typeface and picture styles. The Editor said:

We're moving away from the 'inverted pyramid' styles of writing and concentrating more on 'feature' types of news giving the readers more details. We're targeting stories we feel are more relevant to our readers. For example, a lot of our readers read the Sports section of the paper first. So, we are trying to improve our news content by changing the ways we write stories, change the structure of how the stories are written, and improve on our international coverage as far as the events that are happening in the Middle East and Iraq.

The focus of the *Fiji Sun* is local news, politics and sport, and there is a special emphasis on lifestyle (Body and Soul) and women's sections, and on helping those in need (a regular Helping Hand feature).

Fijilive's major focus is news of interest to metropolitan readers who can access the internet. This includes politics and major events. The Editor said that it has developed a large online community based on features such as the Fijilive forum, where readers can discuss news and issues affecting Fiji.

The focus of IBI's magazines is regional news and analysis. The Editor-in-Chief said IBI provides analytical stories and information to assist its readers to make informed decisions about the information in the magazines.

PACNEWS contains regional news provided by its members and subscribers.

2.4

Target audience and distribution

The FBCL's Radio Fiji One and Radio Fiji Two target everyone, but mainly audiences of 25-plus years. The music stations Radio Mirchi, Radio Fiji Gold, and Naba Dua Ena Sere FM target adults under

40 years old, while 2Day FM targets young listeners under 25 years. The target market for 2Day FM accounts for approximately 35 per cent of Fiji's total population. The FBCL has both AM and FM networks, and relies on the AM network (Radio Fiji One and Radio Fiji Two) to reach the outer islands. The FBCL's PSB contract requires that these stations reach the majority of the Fijian and Hindustani language populations. The Bula Network (Radio Mirchi, Fiji Gold and Naba Dua Ena Sere FM) has a national FM coverage and 2Day FM presently only reaches the greater Suva area.

96FM was CFL's flagship station when it was launched in 1985. Today the format has narrowed, focusing more on the core market of Westernised listeners aged over 18. The group is urbanised and largely based in Suva, Nadi and Lautoka. Legend FM targets people who grew up listening to FM96 in the 1980s and '90s. Viti FM is aimed at the Fijian market, noting that many urban-based younger indigenous listeners tune in to FM96. It targets the 25–40-plus audience. Navtarang targets the Indo-Fijian 18–35-year-old market, and Radio Sargam targets the 40-plus demographic.¹⁸ CFL estimates that it reaches close to 90 per cent of the population. Since 1985 CFL has developed a network of 11 separate transmitter stations that provide coverage of all the major islands of the Fiji group. All stations broadcast on FM.

The *Fiji Times* (Monday to Saturday) targets 18–49-year-old workers nationwide, male and female.

The *Sunday Times* targets 18–49-year-old workers, nationwide, male and female.

Na Lalakai (weekly Fijian newspaper) targets the older age group, a unique readership in that very few read other papers.

Shanti Dutt (weekly Hindustani newspaper) also targets the older age group, with very few reading other papers.

The young school-age readership of *Kaila!* (weekly youth newspaper) is also unique in that very few read other papers.

Shanti Dutt Diwali Annual (special edition for Hindu festival Diwali) targets the older age group and also has a large number of overseas sales.

The main audience of the Fiji Times online service (daily) is overseas.

Fiji Times Limited newspapers (with the exception of *Kaila!*) are distributed to the four main islands, where transport is available. The exceptions are Rotuma and the Lekeba group, where there is no regular transport. *Kaila!* is distributed more broadly as regular weekly distribution services are more prevalent.

The *Daily Post* targets the 18–40 age group. The Editor also said:

People usually buy one paper and share it among nine other people. What we are targeting is that one person buys one paper and the other nine have to get their own and the content of the paper has to have that drawing power in order to achieve this. (Editor)

The paper is distributed in both Viti Levu (Central/Eastern and Western divisions) and Vanua Levu (Northern division). It is not distributed in the outlying islands like the Lau group and Kadavu (Southern division).

Readers of *Fiji Sun* range from 18 to 49 years of age and are more likely to be married. They are predominantly home owners, with most of them having two to three children per household. The majority of readers are of Indian decent and mainly work in clerical and administration white-collar positions in permanent employment. SUN readers enjoy keeping abreast with current affairs and reading about local news, community and lifestyle features, sporting activities and entertainment.¹⁹

The *Fiji Sun* is distributed in both Viti Levu (Central/Eastern and Western divisions) and Vanua Levu (Northern division). There is no distribution to outlying islands like the Lau group and Kadavu (Southern division) except Ovalau (where the old capital of Fiji, Levuka, is located).

IBI's *Fiji Islands Business* target decision makers in private and public sectors and readers interested in news analysis. *Islands Business* targets a similar audience, but it includes overseas readers. It is distributed to all Pacific Island countries, and Australia and New Zealand. Both magazines are published in English.

PACNEWS has approximately 45 subscribers in Pacific Island countries, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and the USA.

Fiji One TV targets a range of age groups, from children to adults, with age-specific programming. Fiji One reaches 85 per cent of the main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Once the proposed satellite service is in place, the signal will reach the whole country.

Fijilive reaches mostly the urban areas where people have access to the internet. Target groups are business people, NGOs, other media who use the online service to complement radio, newspapers and/or to monitor and follow up news developments. The bulk of Fijilive's audience is overseas — former Fiji citizens and residents, travellers and the media. Rural areas do not get access to online news due to lack of infrastructure: electricity, computers and telephone lines. This could possibly begin to change with the introduction of prepaid internet, which is much quicker and easier to set up and use. However, the problem still remains that there is very limited access to information technology in rural Fiji. Fijilive publishes in English.

2.5 Audience research

The FBCL has subscribed to the Tebbutt Research Fiji media survey since 2003, because this is the most extensive media survey in the country. FBCL's CEO said:

We do not agree with a lot of things they say, we question certain things but in the absence of any other national survey we have no choice ... Our prime objective is to make sure that the programs we put out are of some use to the listeners and is what the listeners want and not we say we think they want.

In addition to Tebbutt Research, the FBCL has also employed a full-time research assistant, a graduate from the University of the South Pacific (USP) to conduct focus groups and other research.

CFL has regularly conducted audience research for the last 15 years, also using the Tebbutt Research Fiji media survey. Surveys are conducted in urban centres on Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Typically 1000 respondents are interviewed and they are asked about their listening habits in the last 24 hours.

Then with every phone call taken, it is policy of our on-air staff to ask certain questions, whether it is music related or news, if there is written feedback or phone calls it is all taken very seriously, that's the perfect one where you're getting the audience straight in your face, ongoing every day. (General Manager)

CFL also organises a number of public events where station staff meet listeners and find out about their interests.

The *Daily Post's* circulation department developed a questionnaire in 2004, based on three questions: (1) How do people read? (2) What's important to them? (3) What do they actually read? The Editor said the paper also gets feedback from informal phone calls:

We get a lot of calls from people who comment on the newspaper. Other callers make suggestions on how we can improve the paper. Response also is received for our 'feature' write-ups on say for example, education, both from schools that have taken part and schools that want to take part.

Sun Fiji previously conducted a survey every year through an Australian-based company operating in Fiji called the Business Hut. However, in 2004 it stopped this and placed questionnaires in the paper over a three-week period, with prizes offered to those who sent in answers.

The *Fiji Times* engages Tebbutt Research to undertake surveys on topical issues with specific age groups. This research is also available to the public. The *Fiji Times* Ltd is the only newspaper company that buys this research for its readers and publishes it.

The Managing Director of the *Fiji Times* referred to the challenge of newspaper publishing in small markets:

It is difficult to be all things for all readers as our market is so small. National newspapers are required to also be regional and suburban newspapers as well; there are few specialist newspapers.

Fiji One TV subscribes to Tebbutt Research and the survey results provide the station with details on viewer demographics, viewing interests and habits. Fiji One TV uses this research to review its programming and marketing strategies.

Fijilive's server provides statistics on what pages its users visit, how many visitors come to the site, where they go, what links they click and so on. This can be tracked in real time. The Editor said, 'Fijilive has found that its users are mostly concerned with politics as this tends to be perceived as having a major effect on Fiji as a whole.'

The *Islands Business* Editor-in-Chief said audience research is difficult because of the geographical spread of the Pacific. 'We can't afford to send somebody out to do this. The only form of research we do is when our journalists visit the locations and ask people on the ground about what they think of our publications.'

PACNEWS has done one audience survey in 2003. The survey was conducted in-house through a questionnaire that was emailed or faxed to all the subscribers. Feedback from subscribers indicated that they wanted political and business news.

2.6 NGO and government access

Some of the media said they rely on NGOs and government departments to contact them with news. They tend to seek out spokespeople from these sectors only for comment on specific stories. Those that did contact NGOs on a regular basis listed only a small number as effective contacts, such as the Human Rights Commission, Citizen's Constitutional Forum, Women's Crisis Centre, Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Greenpeace, the Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy, fem'LINK, and the NGO Coalition on Human Rights.

Purchasing space in print media and broadcast time can be expensive for NGOs and government departments.

FBCL charges FJ\$275 for a 15-minute program (VAT exclusive) and FJ\$400 for a 30-minute program (VAT exclusive). It is possible for NGO or government departments to negotiate rates for long-term contracts or special events or broadcasts. The final decision is made by the CEO. The FBCL also has sponsored timeslots six or seven times a day for community announcements (at no cost) as well as paid messages.

The FBCL's CEO observed that NGO demand for access is irregular:

There is a huge gap I tell you from how I see it. NGOs seem to get activated when there is a project. For example, International Women's Day everyone gets excited then after International Women's Day they forget about it. National Health Week they all get excited; after that it is forgotten.

CFL's four commercial stations (FM96, Legend FM, Navtarang and Viti FM) have very limited 'buyable' airtime outside of the standard spot blocks. Radio Sargam is structured in a public service format and therefore has extensive long-format talk opportunities. There is not a specific cost structure; cost would be calculated depending on the duration, day, time zone and frequency. To date, government departments and NGOs have been slow to respond to Radio Sargam, appearing to prefer the longer-established FBCL.

Interestingly enough, when government departments really have to get a message out then they come to us; for example, water or electricity cuts they'll come [to us] and pay for those. [But if they] want to talk about AIDS and women's rights I get the impression that they won't use us and they prefer the FBCL. (General Manager)

CFL has one slot per hour (Community Fact File or What's Up? on FM96) for announcements, but this is generally for non-profit organisations such as a sports clubs or women's groups.

In comparison to the FBCL, fewer NGOs and government departments approach CFL stations with program ideas and requests. In part, this is due to the CFL stations' music format, but it also reflects the findings in FSM and the Marshall Islands about the lack of NGO and government use of the newer commercial FM stations.

The *Fiji Times* newspapers will print articles from NGOs and government departments at no cost if they fit editorial policy. Government departments and NGOs can also write columns. Letters to the editor are a frequent source of NGO commentary.

Some NGOs and government departments that advertise with the *Daily Post* are given space for news based on press releases that they send to the paper. All NGOs and government advertising is paid for.

The *Daily Post* has an arrangement with the Ministry of Agriculture to write feature articles and provide photographs whenever its officers make a trip to any area in Fiji. The same arrangement is in place with the Ministry of Information, which supplies the paper with information and development content on a weekly basis.

The *Fiji Sun* provides similar access for NGO content as the other dailies, and readers' letters are welcome.

Articles written by NGOs and government departments can be published as features on Fijilive with an attached biography on the author and organisation. Fijilive said that the following government departments and business organisations produce information on a regular basis: Ministry of Information, Police, Retailers Association, Reserve Bank of Fiji, and the South Pacific Stock Exchange.

The Senior Journalist at PACNEWS said:

All the NGOs in Fiji send in their press releases. If the material is written in-depth, in a 'feature' style on a particular issue, then it goes on the PACDIGEST bulletin, which is separate from the normal news bulletins.

Fiji One TV has guidelines on advertising and/or program content that take into account its target audience's expectations about timeslots, such as children's programming, family viewing and so on, and NGO and government programs need to consider this. Fiji One TV also has some conditions on its licence that prohibit denigrating chiefly institutions and it would need to ensure program content did not breach this. Some NGOs have had programs aired on Fiji One TV during the 'down time' of the program schedule, rather than during peak viewing times, which are determined by ratings and advertising. The NGOs involved have not had to pay for this airtime. Fiji One TV airs three government-produced current affairs programs during its normal viewing schedule and, if the schedule permits, NGOs and government departments can purchase time during regular viewing hours for programs and/or advertising campaigns.

2.7

Journalism resources

FBCL has 17 journalists, one of whom (the News Director) is an investigative journalist. Cadets require the Fiji School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) or Form 7. General knowledge and capabilities of the applicants are also important at the interview stage. One journalist has a BA in journalism (USP) and two are studying part time (tourism and accounting). The News Director said, 'What we are also looking for right now is those who are multi-skilled, they can do English, Fijian and Hindustani. To us that is like the complete journalist.' The average journalism experience is eight years. Salary range for journalists is FJ\$6000 (cadet) to a maximum of FJ\$20,000 (senior editorial level). The main reason given for journalists leaving is a better salary.

CFL has 16 journalists working for the five stations in three different languages. All the senior journalists are expected to be able to work on investigative journalism. Cadets need to have completed secondary school, understand English well, and be good presenters. CFL has a selection process for cadets, including a range of assessments.

The News Editor said at least two of the journalists had a BA in journalism from USP and one is in the process of completing a diploma in journalism. Some of the other journalists received certificates for basic journalism training from the Fiji Journalism Institute (now closed).²⁰ Years of journalism experience range from five to fourteen. Some journalists have been with the company since 1985. The minimum salary is FJ\$8000 and extends up to FJ\$30,000:

You come in and get the training and go through six-monthly appraisals. If you perform well, you are entitled to a minimum increment of FJ\$500 after six months. A proper assessment is carried out; three basic goals are set out for them to ensure that they achieve these goals.
(News Director)

CFL said it has a reasonably stable journalism staff, and reasons for this included the potential for advancement in the organisation and the bonus scheme, where 10 per cent of the company's annual profits are shared among the staff. Also, staff can buy shares in the company.

Fiji Times Ltd has a total of 52 journalists. The *Fiji Times* has 43 journalists, *Na Lalakai* has two journalists, *Shanti Dutt* has four journalists, and *Kaila!* has three journalists. The *Fiji Times* also has three stringers on Taveuni, Savusavu and Lavuka. Three journalists can undertake investigative reports. The Fiji Times Ltd requires that cadets have a minimum of Form 6 education. One journalist has a BA in journalism from USP and three are studying journalism at USP part time in 2005. The average number of years of journalism experience is five to six years. Six journalists have three years experience, there are three cadet journalists and the Editor has twenty-five years experience. Cadet journalists start on FJ\$6800 to \$7800 per annum and if they have a university degree they may be fast-tracked. Sub-editors receive \$18,000 to \$24,000 per annum. Senior journalists receive between \$22,000 and \$35,000. Company-wide salaries are adjusted each year in January, and when staff are promoted or when responsibilities increase.

The *Times* estimates that young male journalists work at the newspaper for about three years, and young women for up to five years. Journalists leave to go to other media or to NGOs.

The *Daily Post* has twelve journalists, seven in news, two in features and three in sports, and two offices, one in Suva and one in Lautoka. The minimum level of education for cadets at the *Daily Post* is completion of Form 7 (equivalent to a Foundation Program at USP). The Editor said the paper would also like to encourage university graduates. The average years of journalism experience is seven. Two journalists from the *Daily Post* have a degree in journalism (USP). Salary range is FJ\$5000 (cadet) to FJ\$19,900.

Most journalists stay for three to four years. The main reasons for leaving are the lack of resources and uncertainty about the company's financial situation and its ability to offer attractive remuneration packages.

The *Fiji Sun's* Suva office has about 20 journalists and the Lautoka office has six journalists. On average the journalists have four years experience. One journalist has a degree in journalism (USP). Salaries range from FJ\$5500 (cadet) to FJ\$20,000 (senior journalist or subeditor).

Fijilive has three journalists and an editor. Fijilive requires a degree as a minimum entry level requirement, but the Editor said this is not always possible as there are not enough graduates coming out of the system. It therefore recruits journalists from other companies, with a minimum of three years work experience. One journalist at Fijilive has a BA in journalism (USP) and another has a specialist degree in history/politics.

Fijilive's pay scale is FJ\$10,000 to FJ\$20,000 per annum. Journalists stay at Fijilive for around three years and leave for better pay and work conditions.

IBI has five journalists working in Fiji (three writers and two stringers), three stringers in PNG, two in the Cook Islands and one in the Northern Marianas. IBI only recruits experienced journalists. None of the current journalists have a formal journalism qualification. Most of the journalists, including the stringers, have 15 years of experience. All the journalists work on investigative journalism. The salary range is FJ\$25,000-plus per annum.

Journalists can stay at IBI for up to 10 years. Reasons they leave are to find a challenge or break into other media companies after being with IBI for a long period. Salary is not an issue.

PACNEWS employs two journalists, one with 14 years experience and the other with 10 years. Neither of the journalists have a formal journalism qualification but one is in the process of completing a BA in history/politics and public administration at USP. Both journalists work on investigative stories. PACNEWS journalists have been recruited on the basis of their industry experience. Salary range is FJ\$16,000 to FJ\$19,000 per annum.

Fiji Television has 14 journalists. The News Director said 20 would be the ideal number as this would provide the additional journalists and researchers required to produce investigative current affairs. Fiji One TV prefers recruits to be journalism graduates and/or journalists who have had a minimum of five years experience. The News Director said the station no longer wanted to recruit cadets who were school leavers. Four of the fourteen journalists have tertiary qualifications (two degrees, two diplomas) from USP. The journalists have about eight and a half years experience on average, with some being relatively new, while the News Director has 17 years experience.

Fiji One TV increased its cadet salaries in 2004 from FJ\$6000 to FJ\$10,000. The entry level pay for a public servant (school leaver) is FJ\$6000 to FJ\$8000 per annum.

Fiji One TV cited marriage, migration and salary as the reasons for journalists leaving, and said the journalism staff has been very stable, with only two people leaving in the last two years.

Equipment resources

FBCL has computers, internet access and tape recorders. The News Director said, 'We are trying also to get into the digital age where we get digital recorders because of the quality.'

Currently the FBCL has a mix of analogue and digital equipment (recording and editing). Due to cost cutting, journalists have to buy their own tape recorders, and use their own mobile phones to file stories. Mobile phones are not supplied by the FBCL. In very remote areas, the journalists file through radio telephone.

CFL has state-of-the-art equipment including computers, recorders (analogue and digital), telephone recording equipment, an audio-wizard system where interviews are downloaded and recorded, a production studio that runs on wizard, internet computers for the website in the

newsroom. The News Director has a mobile phone (company paid) and most of the journalists have their own mobile phones and the company compensates them if they file stories using these. In remote areas, CFL relies on radio telephone systems in all its vehicles. These are connected to its base station and have a live feed into the studios. CFL also use EASYTEL in the remote areas, where telephone is connected through the electricity lines.

Fiji Times journalists have access to desktop computers with internet access as required, hand-held recorders, telephone access to rural and outer islands, laptop computers, prepaid SIM cards for mobile phones as required and digital cameras. Seventy-five per cent of the journalists can dial up and file stories. The stringers have their own digital cameras and computer, with internet access to file stories.

The *Daily Post* journalists have computers with internet access, one vehicle that is shared by news, sports, features and the photographers, and the company sells hand-held tape recorders to the journalists if they want them.

The Editor said the equipment was not adequate. The newspaper needs more quality computers and software to increase capability, and better cameras and more transport. 'The job itself is very stressful considering the pressure for deadlines and when other obstacles, like having the computer constantly breaking down, makes the job more frustrating.' The Editor added:

In terms of production quality when compared with the Fiji Times and Fiji Sun, we can do much better than what we are doing now but again it comes back to the finances and limited resources. We are currently using a machine that should be classified 'obsolete'. It's been here since the newspaper started in 1988. The other two newspapers are far ahead of us in terms of colour because of the machines they use.

Sun Fiji has computers with internet access, transport, tape recorders, and cameras. *Fiji Sun* journalists are reportedly well equipped with computers, mobile phones and transport.

Fijilive has computers, internet, FTP, html software (Dreamweaver), digital camera, imaging software (Photoshop), tape recorder, telephone access, including mobiles for field reporting. The Editor said that, due to the nature of the online industry, equipment has to be constantly upgraded.

IBI was described as quite well equipped, and journalists have the latest computers and software programs (Editor-in-Chief).

PACNEWS has desktop and laptop computers with an internet connection, telephones, a video digital camera and tape recorders. The Senior Journalist described the equipment as 'adequate for now'. But she would like the technical capacity to send back audio and video files from the field.

Fiji Television's News Director described Fiji One TV's equipment as up to date. The station has recently replaced all its cameras and editing equipment. He said more cameras and edit booths will be needed to produce the proposed current affairs program.

Every staff member also has a company-issued mobile phone, as well as access to internet and email. The News Director said, 'We try to make our guys more mobile so we use Sony digital handycams. We have invested in two of these over the last few months.'

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

FBCL produces an extensive range of talkback programs and news. Talkback is broadcast on Radio Fiji One, Radio Fiji Two, Radio Mirchi, and 2Day FM.

The FBCL also produces daily current affair programs. The News Director said, 'In the mornings it's about five minutes on the 7 am major bulletin. In the evening it's limited to about ten minutes. We also have them on the Hindustani and Fijian language programs.'

The News Director believes the ratio of rural to urban program content could be improved:

In some places, we do have our reporters in rural areas. In other places, we use school teachers, postmasters and government officials who we don't pay. But we very seldom use these people. Independently, we have also produced programs that highlight the poor infrastructure in the rural areas and the difficulties the farmers face because of this. We've raised questions and had discussions with the ministers of government concerned in trying to get them to go out to these villages to see for themselves the difficulties the people are facing. These programs run on both the news and current affairs segment. The people in the rural areas see things differently from our standpoint here in the capital city. We need more

rural-based programs. At the moment, there is too much emphasis on the urban areas, too much picking the brains of urban dwellers and more people need to be made aware of what's happening in the rural areas.

CFL produces features on its website (fijivillage.com) that come from the daily radio reports. For its community-based station, Radio Sargam, it has specially produced current affair programs that run three times a day focusing either on the major story of the day, or on issues that affect the listeners. There are talkback programs on Navtarang and Viti FM at least twice a week, presented by announcers. The News Director works with the announcers to determine what issues should be highlighted to encourage debate.

CFL's news approach differs depending on the station:

FM96 is a youth station and the journalists working in FM96 need to gather a fair amount of stories that are youth related. Some of those youth-related stories will be used again on the other four stations; Legend looks at a Westernised, English market where the story of the day would be 'what's happening in the country today that's big'. So for the news on this station, the story is much longer because the listeners are people who really want to consume the information; the Fijian station listeners want to know stories about ensuring that their culture is preserved, tradition, the Great Council of Chiefs, what's happening in the villages, what's happening in the Fijian Affairs Ministry, Fijian Affairs scholarships, Native Land Trust Board (NLTB) so that will become paramount for them. Some of the stories from here may be used on the other stations, but in a different form. For Navtarang and Sargam, their main issues will be the sugar industry and the business community. They will carry these stories in depth and do the follow-ups. So when the stories are pumped into the system in English for the whole newsroom, then we decide which ones go where because that's what the station's listeners want to hear. There is never a straight translation, word for word, from one station to another.
(News Director)

As news is broadcast hourly, the reports tend to be brief. A detailed report will only be given if the news is very significant. CFL broadcasts news in English, Fijian and Hindustani.

CFL does not have journalists or stringers in the outer islands because of problems with communication. Journalists are based in the main centres (Lautoka, Ba, Labasa, Savusavu) and they can travel to the rural areas and outer islands as required.

PACNEWS is a regional news service, and its focus is not just on Fiji. It sends out three bulletins a day via email to its subscribers.

Fiji Television's major news bulletins are broadcast in English (6 pm and 10 pm); the news headlines on weekdays are in Hindustani (7 pm) and Fijian (8 pm). Close Up is the weekly English current affairs program that is broadcast on Sundays and addresses issues of current interest. The News Director said, 'It allows us to question civil society leaders on their actions and their plans. It is a very popular program; in the latest rating period it was the fourth most popular program on Fiji One TV, the first three were news.'

Viti Ni Kua is the Fijian language current affairs program. It airs weekly at 3:05 pm on Sundays and covers issues such as teenage pregnancies, STIs (sexually transmitted infections), HIV/AIDS, savings and education. Viti Ni Kua also includes a panel that take questions from callers. Fiji This Week is a half-hour round-up of the top stories of the week.

In addition to this Fiji One TV broadcasts three current affairs programs produced by the government's Film and Television Unit, Dateline Fiji, Voqa-ni Davui and Sitara.

Covering rural and outer island news can be a challenge because television relies on vision. The News Director said:

We are looking for someone on Taveuni but when it comes to outer islands like Yasawa and Lau, financially it is difficult, you need someone who has a camera, and then someone once they've got the shots to bring them back to Suva ... if there is an outbreak of [leptospirosis] on Lakeba, it would be more practical for us to send someone to Lakeba on the next available flight, which then means the person would have to stay there for a week or three or four days. In our business everything is about the pictures; sometimes we are forced just to depend on stock footage, which can get boring. It is an expensive exercise to send somebody out for three days like that; so we take every opportunity when there is a government boat going to get somebody on the boat to get as many stories as they can.

Fiji One TV can broadcast live from its Lautoka office. The News Editor also said:

In the News division planning meeting with the staff (a few months ago) there was consensus amongst the staff that there is the staff, equipment and the duty to provide the people of Fiji with a local current affairs program; I think also that there is a market there. So there are two plans this division is looking at: one is the longer news bulletin and the other is a half-hour current affairs program.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

The FBCL produces about 30 local stories per day. The FBCL stations broadcast 14 bulletins a day, of which 3 are major bulletins and the rest are hourly updates.

CFL produces at least 20 local stories per day across all five stations. FM96 has 6 news bulletins daily, and the other four stations have 14 bulletins each.

The *Fiji Times* publishes on average 35 in-depth local news stories from Monday to Friday, and 60 local stories in its Saturday edition. *Na Lalakai* produces 20 local stories weekly and *Shanti Dutt* produces 25 local stories weekly.

The *Daily Post* publishes around 36 local stories per day on average, depending on the number of pages printed.

Sun Fiji newspapers publish up to 35 local news stories Monday to Saturday and 25 on Sunday, in addition to local features.

Fijilive uploads 30 stories a day from various sources. The website's journalists produce about 6 local news and sports stories daily. This is complemented by updates from the FBCL and PACNEWS.

PACNEWS produces approximately 2 local stories for each of its three daily bulletins. Its major focus is regional news.

Fiji One TV produces 24 local stories for broadcast daily, except during the Christmas/New Year period (four weeks) when it is an advertising holiday and people go on leave. There are also 12 sports stories a day and the News Director said some sport issues lead the bulletin because they are important governance issues.

Fiji Television Limited also runs a pay television service so that those who miss the 6 pm news can catch the repeat broadcast on the pay TV channel and SKY Plus. The CEO reports viewers have responded positively to this.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

Governance priorities on the FBCL PSB stations are as stipulated in its contract: national development management and leadership, national and cultural heritage protection and promotion, special social and community obligations to the entire populous with national and regional coverage.

The News Director said that the FBCL reports on a range of governance issues such as political activities, religion, violence and rural issues.

The FBCL CEO said it has received donor funding from the BBC to record programs on ICT development in Fiji.

CFL's governance priorities are HIV/AIDS, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), human rights and government transparency and integrity. The News Director said:

Our main objective in the newsroom is to hold people accountable for whatever actions they have done. If you are a public office holder, you should be held accountable not because we think you should be held accountable, but because the taxpayers think you should be held accountable ... That's what drives us. At the end of the day, the number of stories that exposes these issues and we've got issues coming from Parliament, issues from Annual Reports, issues from people highlighting allegations of corruption and the recent scams that we have covered.

CFL operates 24 hours a day, with news, updates and reports during times of crisis and natural disasters.

The *Fiji Times* Editorial and Information Technology Manager described good governance as 'innate in what we do'. Areas covered include business, reconciliation and racism, crime, corruption,

government and multi-party cooperation, the sugar industry and issues related to farmers and landowners and regional issues.

The *Daily Post's* Editor said:

We want to serve as an avenue for people to raise their concerns and express their opinions. We also strive for fair reporting and balance. For example, the government has done something wrong and, despite it being the major shareholder, we will highlight the fault and also give them an opportunity to respond before printing the story.

Sun Fiji papers highlight corrupt practices in government and private companies. Politics, human rights, health and law and order are also covered extensively.

Fijilive's Editor cited law and order as a high-profile issue with recent trials of those involved in the May 2000 coup. The government's relationship with the Fiji Labour Party has also dominated the headlines with the ongoing multi-party Cabinet issue and the Talanoa talks attracting local and overseas interest. The government's restructure of the sugar industry is also an issue as it affects the county's second-largest revenue earner.

IBI's governance issues include business, tourism, aviation, health, the economy and politics (local and regional).

PACNEWS covers the accountability of politicians, how transparent they are in terms of the work they do and the operations of the government; the implementation of the eight Principles of Good Governance endorsed by the South Pacific Forum leaders; human rights and the law. The Senior Journalist said:

A lot of these governance issues are new to the Pacific and now that the media is talking about it, people are now starting to question those who are in leadership about their human rights. The definition of human rights in Tonga would differ from how we define it here in Fiji or the Solomon Islands and now that the media and civil societies are talking about it, a lot of these issues are reflected in the stories that we get from our members, which are beginning to be issues in their own countries.

Fiji One TV's News Director commented on the coverage of governance issues:

There is a feeling in the community that there is a lot of corruption, abuse of office, police admit that white collar crime is on the rise, shady dealings when it comes to contracts, tenders, etc. I think the media tends to dwell on these sensational governance issues. There are a lot of governance issues out there. Sometimes I think these aren't recognised as governance issues — constitution, board appointments, the environment.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

The FBCL cited interviews with sources, press conferences, press releases, the internet, BBC, PACNEWS and RNZI. The FBCL also rebroadcasts two international radio services, Radio Australia and Radio France International.

CFL's News Director said interviewing regular contacts is CFL's main news-gathering technique. The News Director said:

I think we have grown in this area also because before, journalists were satisfied with 'no comment' - and this is going back about 10 years. Now, we are asking the question 'Why should we take no comment?' He/she should be held accountable. A bit more aggressive but still respecting the people they are interviewing.

CFL also uses a number of other news services: BBC radio and television news, RNZI, Radio Australia, ABC online, PINA Nius Online, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and CNN online.

The Fiji Times newspapers use interviews (telephone and face-to-face), press releases, press conferences and the internet. Regional sources are PINA Nius Online, Australian Associated Press (AAP), Reuters, Agence France-Presse (AFP) and all News Limited papers.

The *Daily Post* uses interviews (face-to-face and telephone), press releases, internet and press conferences. For regional news it uses PACNEWS, and for international news Reuters and AFP. The Editor said, 'One of the reasons we use them is because they run stories that are relevant to our readers here in Fiji.'

Sun Fiji subscribes to Fairfax, and uses PINA Nius Online, Reuters and Getty Images.

Fijilive uses the internet, press releases, press conferences, and interviews. Regional sources are PACNEWS and PINA Nius Online.

IBI listed telephone interviews and emails, and it monitors radio news, press conferences, PINA Nius Online, ABC Asia Pacific website and RNZI website. Most of its journalists are stringers for other news services like AP, ABC and RNZI.

Most of PACNEWS's information is from the internet, materials emailed to it by members, conferences and interviews. PACNEWS also uses Radio Australia, RNZI, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *New Zealand Herald* (all subscribers). It has a reciprocal arrangement with Radio Australia and RNZI where they use each other's material.

Fiji TV One's main news-gathering techniques are interviews, press releases, press conferences and telephone interviews, which are also televised if the interviewee is available for a camera interview in time for the newscast. It subscribes to PACNEWS and PINA Nius Online, Radio Australia, the TVNZ in-house feed at 6 pm, the BBC feed at 4 pm (relayed at 6:30 pm), Associated Press Television News (APTN) and Reuters.

2.12 Media access to government content

CFL's News Director said it can access government information via the government's website (updated daily) by contacting government officers and through audio clips of all speeches:

We can get information, we can interview ministers, and we can interview CEOs. We may have to use various techniques in order to get some of them, but we definitely do not have major problems in that area. For example, our journalists go to the Parliament complex and they can interview various ministers on various issues without a problem.

The *Fiji Times* Editorial/Information Technology Manager said some departments like the Treasury are very quick to respond. The government website provides reasonable access to information, but it is not a whole-of-government service yet, and there are some gaps in the information. The *Fiji Times* has been instrumental in organising the Fiji Media Council's Editors' Forums. The forums provide a mechanism for media, government and NGOs to meet and discuss national issues.

The *Daily Post's* Editor said that the newspaper contacts government mainly by sending questions via email and gets email responses.²¹

FBCL's News Director said information on the government website is current, but the FBCL updates its news every hour, and the website is not updated to this degree during the day. As mentioned earlier, the FBCL also broadcasts the national budget session.

Fijilive said it has access to government speeches and releases at short notice.

Fiji One TV's News Director said he was 'happy with what is available online and also faxed or emailed, but sometimes it is information overload':

Amongst the information units of government, Agriculture is active, but the Health Promotion unit is not as effective as they could be, it can be tedious. They give us what they think we should have and the difficulty is the follow-up, getting more details and dealing with the government bureaucracy.

The police are the most effective because they have a public relations officer, an accessible Commissioner and senior staff who have the authority and confidence to speak on their issues/divisions.

The ideal situation would be that at each level of a government ministry there should be a key spokesperson to reduce the room for error.

When Parliament is sitting, Fiji Television videotapes the sessions for news, and broadcasts Parliament live, including the Senate, on Fiji One TV.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

FBCL cited staff numbers and available equipment.

CFL's main constraint relates to available staff, travel and time in relation to covering news outside the main centres. Better communications in these areas would make contact easier.

The *Fiji Times* cited available journalists and senior journalists, and advertising and space.

The *Daily Post* is constrained by available space (advertising takes up around 45 per cent of the paper) and lack of equipment.

The size of the small online journalism team at Fijilive can limit the number of possible new stories and follow-ups.

The *Islands Business* Editor-in-Chief said the magazine is 52 pages and they work within that. 'We mostly depend on our stringers around the region to provide us with material content and they are not so reliable as we would want them to be because of the work pressure they have in their own countries.'

PACNEWS is constrained by the limited number of journalists (two).

The News Editor of Fiji One TV said:

We are limited by the duration of the bulletin; on some days we produce more stories than we are able to use. Newspapers have the advantage that they can add four pages to the run on any given day, or reduce for that matter; we do not have that luxury.

2.14 Threats to funding

None of the media reported losing government or corporate funding due to editorial content.

CFL's News Director said some advertisers have approached the station with concerns.

We have received threats not to put names to certain stories and things like that, but we haven't had a full-on legal challenge. We have just received letters and we tell them the reasons the story was run and the issue is just put to rest.

There are reportedly a number of defamation cases pending in the courts against some of the Fiji newspapers.

During the 1987 and 2000 coups, journalists and media organisations were subjected to a number of verbal and physical threats. Some were detained by the military after producing critical material (1987 and 2000), or held hostage by the rebels (2000); others were physically assaulted, and media organisations were occupied. The military took over the original *Fiji Sun's*²² printing plant in 1987 and in 2000 pro-coup supporters ransacked Fiji One TV studios and offices following the broadcast of a program critical of the coup.²³

2.15 Industry training

The regional training program at USP is the main journalism training program for the South Pacific region. USP offers a Diploma in Pacific Journalism and Bachelor of Arts in Journalism for students in the 12 USP island member countries. However, the journalism component of these courses can only be undertaken at the USP's Suva campus, which tends to favour Fiji-based students:

With the regional recruitment, we are limited by a number of factors. I think the main reason is that the staff at the USP Journalism Program do not have the time nor are given the resources to go out and recruit students from these countries. Part of the Journalism Coordinator's job is to be involved in the recruiting of students and to make sure that the regional countries are well served. But ... USP Journalism has been without a Coordinator. The second reason is that the degree structure and the diploma structure is not suited to full-time working journalists, whether they be from Fiji or the region. So the program would be far more attractive to regional journalists if there was flexibility in the structure of journalism courses. (Journalism Lecturer)

In 2002 a number of postgraduate journalism courses were approved and they appear as official courses in the USP calendar. However, they are in name only. There are no teaching staff, curriculum or resources allocated for these courses yet.

USP journalism has links with the industry through its Advisory Board. USP journalism students also spend six weeks on work attachment with a news organisation in Fiji or in the home country of the student. The attachments give the students the opportunity to prove themselves within the newsroom environment of the news organisation of their choice. The program has further strengthened its relationship with the industry by becoming a member of the Fiji Media Council. The links with the donor organisations historically have been in both training and equipment provision, and this continues today. The French government is the biggest foreign government donor.

According to a survey of graduates conducted by USP journalism lecturers, more than 75 per cent of the graduates from 1994 to 2002 have been employed by 29 media employers in nine Pacific countries. Of these, one in five graduates (19 per cent) joined radio stations, significantly more

than those who chose newspapers (11.7 per cent) as a career. Equal numbers (10.7 per cent) were attracted to television and civil society media.²⁴ The number of 2003 journalism graduates working in the industry, however, is small. Of the nine graduates, only two are working as full-time journalists and they are both from Fiji; five are working in public relations in government departments; one is doing public relations work in the hotel industry; and one is a school teacher:

The program also has a broader objective to develop the media industry. If the media industry develops, then jobs are going to be created and working conditions are going to improve and the profession of being a journalist is going to take on a more attractive cue. So the main reason for this I think is that the media sector in Fiji and other South Pacific countries is weak and if you have a weak media sector, then that translates into poor working conditions and pay ... This makes journalism a less attractive option than higher paid positions such as public relations officers working either for government departments or NGOs. If the NGOs are foreign funded, their salaries tend to be higher anyway so it may be a more attractive option. (Journalism Lecturer)

The Fiji Media Council has also facilitated journalism training for cadets (August to October 2004). The Chair of the Council said:

What we're doing is not really a skills-based training program. It's a program where we will be addressing issues such as (i) libel and slander (ii) race relations (iii) women in the media (iv) the sugar industry (v) the national budget (vi) HIV/AIDS (vii) Parliament (viii) economic functions (ix) tourism (x) culture and religion. Each week will be a program addressing these issues really to make the journalists better informed, get them to have a better understanding of say how to cover the national budget and how to write it up. So it's more a content-based training rather than skill-based.

The training ran for 14 weeks, every Saturday, and 15 cadets attended. It was funded by various media organisations (CFL, Fiji Times, Fiji SUN and FBCL).

The MICMR has also supported journalism training. It convinced the Ministry of Fijian Affairs to include media studies and journalism and communications in the scholarships for USP and for overseas study. One was awarded in 2004.

The level of on-the-job journalism and media training varies from one media organisation to another. A number of media organisations are interested in developing accredited training for cadets, and have explored this.

The FBCL News Director said that there is currently no in-house training available:

The areas to be covered would really depend on the needs; what is lacking in the reporters after their initial performance of say six months on the job is reviewed. I've just been here for a year and I'm still trying to sort out how to fit our journalists into our programs. We have just finished going through some 'performance indicators' exercises where we have identified the journalist's strengths and weaknesses and work out some form of training in those areas. I think we used to have a structured training program but I'm still trying to find my way around so that we can implement a more stabilised structure so that anyone new who comes in will know about this, and the pay scale that comes with it.

The FBCL has had discussions with the Fiji Media Council about a 12-week training course for journalists in court reporting and parliamentary reporting. It would like to have an arrangement with USP where journalists can go for short-term attachments and to send journalists to Radio Australia for work attachments. Two FBCL journalists are currently studying part time (tourism studies at USP and accounting at the Fiji National Training Council).

CFL has had a long history of on-the-job training provided by its own staff and trainers it engages. This ranges from training for cadets to professional development for more experienced journalists. The News Director gave the following example:

We also conduct in-house training with a Canadian radio/television broadcaster who comes in every 6 months. The trainer comes in for 2 weeks (minimum) and may stay up to 4 weeks. The requirements for the training is set by the News Director. He comes in and does the air-checks training for everyone, how we are writing our stories, whether it's suited for the different stations and its audience. There is a training session for the new journalists. He also conducts advanced sessions with those he trained 6 months ago. Basically, he focuses on news, sports, how the middle-level journalists are developing, what the senior journalists are getting into, concentrating on personal development. A proper assessment is done after that on where we

need to improve and what needs to be done. The trainer has been a very instrumental player in our newsroom and has contributed a lot to our development throughout.

CFL's News Director also said:

There was a plan in the pipeline to start a course at FIT [Fiji Institute of Technology] to have a Diploma in Journalism course for working journalists set out at particular times during the week which they can attend and they graduate with a diploma after one year. Unfortunately, this has not come through as of yet.

Journalists at the Fiji Times Ltd have access to eight online journalism training modules developed by News Ltd. Four journalists have completed the reporting course, which ran for 12 months (three hours a week). The Editorial/Information Technology Manager said that the company is interested in making this course compulsory for all new journalists. Prior to starting this they will be required to complete a module on News English (two months) for three hours a week. Other journalists have done the online training module for sub-editors. In November 2004 the *Fiji Times* appointed an Editorial Training and Development Manager after a 12 months search. His role is to manage the training of all editorial staff. The *Fiji Times* has a fully equipped dedicated training room, which includes internet access. The training room is also large enough and available for use with other media for combined training.

The *Daily Post* Editor said, 'Cadets are basically thrown into the deep end of the pool. There was and is no training whatsoever in place.' He also said that:

Fiji has a shortage of qualified and experienced sub-editors. We have a situation at the moment where the pool of sub-editors is getting smaller by the day and the new journalists coming in do not supplement the lack of qualified sub-editors who can hold the fort and ensure that whatever is reported is fair, balanced and accurate.

Sun Fiji's training is conducted in-house by the Editor-in-Chief. Sessions are held twice a week and they cover topics like writing skills, how to ask questions and how to develop a lead.

Fijilive does not provide training in-house, but journalists can attend short training activities.

IBI only hires experienced journalists and does not provide on-the-job training. Journalists have attended short training activities organised by the South Pacific Forum Secretariat and PINA (funded by AusAID).

The PACNEWS Senior Journalist said the most important training is hands-on practical training. 'When someone comes on board, they have to learn the ropes practically.' Journalists have also had work attachments at Radio Australia and the ABC in Sydney, and have attended regional meetings and training workshops.

PACNEWS also has exchanges of editors and senior journalists from around the region who visit the newsroom and work for a month in producing bulletins.

Fiji One TV's News Director said that the station is assisting journalists to identify areas they would like to specialise in:

We need specialists on issues, studies and assignments (following the news planning workshop/retreat). We need our people to be broadminded, to have a well-rounded approach to the topic. We need people who can speak with confidence and authority on certain subjects.

Areas identified were: women, health, environment and weather, culture (in the broadest sense) and tradition, finance, courts and police, and politics:

We are encouraging them to do something other than journalism ... One of the things we have been working on since the beginning of this year is to encourage our people to go back to school. Last semester we had four people in the university at varying stages, some completing degrees, completing diplomas, this semester we have one person doing a degree in history/politics; we are encouraging our people who have been in the industry for more than five years not to do a journalism degree, some are doing a journalism diploma just to get their own confidence (and it is the easiest). We are encouraging them to do something other than journalism such as management and public administration, and I am supposed to go and do my Masters in Business Administration. (News Director)

Fiji One also sends journalists on work attachments to TVNZ or the ABC.

Some of the media organisations surveyed said a national media association is needed to promote and organise journalism training. IBI's Editor-in-Chief said:

There is no forum available at the moment to look at the professional development of journalists in Fiji. FIMA [Fiji Islands Media Association] was set up as a training arm for journalists and I think it needs to be re-established because not everyone can go to USP or spare the time to go there. I think Fiji journalists need to be trained so that they can cover issues like governance because how can you cover governance when you don't have the basic skills to cover it?

FIMA's role should be separate to that of a trade union. I think there should be another body set up to look at salaries because there have been a lot of complaints about journalists not being paid well.

I think if we journalists are able to train ourselves, then we should be in a better position to demand receiving good salaries. It will also raise the standards of writing and professionalism and minimise the criticism(s) received from the public about media illiteracy.

The Senior Journalist at PACNEWS added:

I think there is a need to do this because when FIMA was established, they conducted a lot of training for entry-level journalists, which is lacking in a lot of newsrooms in Fiji today. The media companies in Fiji recognised the certificates that were awarded to journalists who completed the courses.

CFL's News Director said if FIMA was revived, it should work with the Fiji Media Council and incorporate the Council's Code of Ethics into the FIMA training program. He said training should be its main objective:

Training mainly of our working journalists because once you enter the media industry, you cannot afford to go on full-time at USP because definitely you can't be out for a number of years and expect to come back and you'll have your job. So, FIMA's primary role, if revived, is to ensure that our journalists, working journalists or new entry journalists get proper training and get proper qualifications.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

FBCL uses the Fiji Media Council Code of Ethics and FBCL policy, which was taken from the BBC Code of Ethics. Each journalist has a copy of this on their computer in electronic form, which they can refer to. The FBCL also has performance indicators, which are assessed every six months, and the journalists are reminded of the Code of Ethics and editorial guidelines at editorial meetings.

CFL has company policies in place in the newsroom and the journalists are briefed on these and the Code of Ethics of the Fiji Media Council.

Fiji Times Limited uses the Fiji Media Council Code of Ethics plus detailed in-house policies available to all journalists. All journalists also must follow the News Limited Style Guide, which is updated annually, as well as the News Corporation Standards of Business Conduct.

The *Daily Post* has dress code, steps to follow when doing an interview and codes of conduct. The heads of departments are responsible for ensuring these codes and practices are carried out. 'We've had a number of our journalists pulled up for breaching some of the rules. The first thing we do here is we counsel them before any written disciplinary action is taken.' (Editor)

The Sun Fiji observes the Fiji Media Council Code of Ethics and has its own code for journalists, which is displayed prominently throughout the newsroom.

Fijilive and IBI follow the Fiji Media Council Code of Ethics.

IBI follows the Fiji Media Council's Code of Ethics.

PACNEWS has its own style guide that highlights the writing format and ethical procedures to follow. 'We ensure that we follow the guidebook by crosschecking each other's work since we don't have an editor.' PACNEWS has not adopted the Fiji Media Council Code of Ethics because 'we have and use our own'. (Senior Journalist)

Fiji One TV follows the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) editorial guidelines, the Fiji Media Council Code of Ethics, and has its own news and current affairs manual. This is currently being updated:

We will have an in-house editorial board that will monitor the code and the complaints procedures which allows people to refer to the code; there will be a standard form on which you will file your complaint and then there will be an assessment procedure at the moment it is done as per contract once per year but there's no process in place to tell a person how you will be assessed; so the new manual has assessment forms which clearly state what areas you will be judged on, the points etc, so that the employee and the employer both know. (News Director)

2.17 Industry self-regulation

The Fiji Media Council is the only body of its type in the region. It was initially set up as a News Council in 1987 and consisted of only a few media organisations. The Council was properly constituted in 1996 and almost all the media organisations in Fiji are members. It includes an independent Complaints Committee with a Chair and two other independent officers. The authors of the Thomson Report assisted with the development of the Code of Ethics and Practice, with input from the public, NGOs, government, and other key stakeholders.

The role of the Media Council is to:

- Promote high journalistic standards;
- Enhance the media's image;
- Safeguard the media's independence;
- Uphold freedom of speech and expression;
- Uphold the public's right to be informed accurately and fairly;
- Promote an independent and effective Complaints Committee;
- Promote a Code of Ethics and Practice for journalists and media organisations.²⁵

The Media Council is funded by the industry. Each member organisation pays an annual subscription of FJ\$1000 and a further FJ\$90 for every journalist employed by that organisation. The only media organisations that are not members are the *Daily Post*, due to non-payment of dues, and Associated Media, for similar reasons. There are eight industry members (*Fiji Sun*, *Fiji Times*, FBCL, Islands Business, Fiji One TV, CFL, USP Journalism and the Ministry of Information), and seven public members. When there is a vacancy for a public member, the Council advertises in the newspapers.

The members of the Complaints Committee are appointed by the Chair of the Council and the four current members have been there since the Council was formed. If the public has a complaint about a breach of the Code of Ethics and Practice, they should write first to the media organisation to lodge the complaint. If they do not get a response within two weeks, they can apply directly to the Secretary of the Council. The Secretary then acts as a conciliator between the two and if he can reach an agreement between the parties that is the end of the matter. But if he cannot, then the matter goes to the Complaints Committee for adjudication.

The Chair said:

I'd say about 95 per cent of the complaints have been about news coverage, and complaints that there's been a breach of the code of ethics and practice. There have been one or two about advertising but not about content so much. That's not really the role of the Media Council to deal with content, say content of television or anything like that. We have a practice each year to invite representations from the public to any changes they feel should be made to the code of ethics and they have been changed about twice since 1999 when it was implemented.

In a recent survey carried out by Tebbutt Research, one of the claims made was that the public are not fully or well enough informed about the complaints process and this is something we are trying to address at the moment to make sure that there's a better system of telling the public, on a regular basis, just how they can go about lodging a complaint.

The adjudication process is a flexible one. The Council can hear representations in writing or verbally from the parties and the results of the adjudication are published. There are no sanctions like fines. 'It is purely a process of embarrassment of the media organisations if they have been judged to breach the code of ethics.' (Chair)

The process in Fiji is similar to that adopted in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The Chair said: 'There have been calls in Fiji for the Complaints Committee to have more "teeth" to be able to impose fines or other sanctions on the media organisations. But this is not what we believe should be done. This is not in the spirit of the process and we don't feel it is necessary at this stage to change this in any way.'

The Chair said that the professional journalism standards could be improved with training and making the profession more attractive:

The turnover of journalists in all the organisations is far too regular now. Journalists from USP or elsewhere stay for a couple of years and they go off and find a job elsewhere that's more attractive. I suppose this comes down to the hours of work, the type of work and the pay and the most common complaint I hear is pay. It's not attractive enough to keep journalists there.

Young journalists also have to see some progression ahead of them if they perform adequately. 'I don't think that progression has been there. There hasn't been job satisfaction that journalists would like to have. And I suppose it's things like giving journalism awards and this is something the Media Council has been talking about for some time.' (Chair)

As noted earlier, the media organisations surveyed expressed interest in reestablishing FIMA to assist with journalism training. The News Director at FBCL also sees a broader professional role for FIMA, which would complement the work of the Media Council:

We would like to know what is happening in the print, in the television so that we can throw and bounce ideas off each other and at the same time there is a body we all belong to ... Journalists need a forum where they can come together to exchange ideas and build relationships. The Commonwealth Journalism Association (CJA) is good in terms of more training funds and exposure at the Commonwealth level but there needs to be a separate local journalism association formed that would take into account the concerns of the local journalists. Our editors and senior people also need to be involved in this association, which should be a locally based one because the issues that they will be dealing with are home-grown.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

In comparison to the small and medium-sized countries in the survey, the media industry in Fiji is large, well developed and reasonably diverse. The higher levels of recruitment and the emphasis on professionalism are also notable. While the industry has a reasonable level of on-the-job training, attempts to establish accredited training for entry level journalists have not been successful. An accredited basic media and journalism course (certificate and/or diploma level) would address current gaps in cadet training.

Limited specialist training within each newsroom reduces the capacity of journalists to identify issues or to actually understand the range of issues connected to good governance. The long-standing or conventional interpretation of good governance tends to focus on issues of transparency, accountability, anti-corruption and white-collar crime. There is a need to address the political as well as the societal and economic aspects of good governance and to broaden this definition.

It was acknowledged by several of the News Editors that behind-the-news, in-depth analysis is lacking and not feasible due to staffing, space and/or timeslot constraints.

Not all newsrooms have access to reasonable equipment to enable them to produce quality content. There were a number of references to the need for mobile technology — laptops and mobile telephones — to enable journalists to file stories from the field. Basics such as hand-held recorders for interviews, can also reduce the margin for error.

A lot of the news and the people profiled in the news are centred around Suva, due to news deadlines and the pressure to deliver regular bulletins. This is exacerbated by limited staff, costs involved in local travel, and irregular boat and airline services.

Some potential initiatives include:

- Enhancing newsroom leadership and management to improve technical and human resource allocation and planning, and the development of career paths for journalists.
- Professional development for mid-level and senior journalists to encourage and support specialisation in areas such as the development of legislation, court reporting, economics,

politics, health, education, gender equity, the environment and so on, to increase the depth of news coverage in key areas of national importance.

- Continuing to invest in the range of training initiatives already under way, would help to sustain them. This could be supported by the production of an in-country and/or regional handbook on issue-based experts — people who would be available at local, national and regional level, from government sector to private sector, as well as civil society groups and individuals to comment on issues.
- Encourage USP Journalism to resource and develop more flexible delivery options for students and working journalists so that study on campus is not the only option. Support also for increased resources to enable USP Journalism to be delivered at USP Centres, to increase the take-up of these courses by students outside Fiji.
- Support the development of independent and community-based media. Community or independent media forms (documentaries and local program production for radio and television, community radio, community-based publications) could be used to further diversify media content and formats, target niche audiences and provide content for the mainstream media on rural issues and other areas that do not receive adequate coverage.
- Develop and strengthen media, NGO and government networks. Many of the news editors are encouraging a stronger partnership across the three sectors, and training initiatives and forums like the Editors' Forum could further develop this.²⁶

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

MICMR is the government's major information agency, providing the link between the government, media and the public. It includes an Information Services unit, a News Department, the Film and Television Unit (FTU), a Photography Unit, a Research, Publication and Website section, and a Public Relations Unit (PRU).²⁷

The Government Information Services division is the most active and well-resourced in the Pacific countries surveyed. This has evolved over the last decade, as government has gained a better appreciation of working with the media.

MICMR recognises the role of the media in nation building and therefore advocates the need for collaboration between government, local authorities and NGOs in promoting national unity by encouraging people's participation in development through well-researched and informative material for public dissemination.²⁸

Other government information units work independently of the MICMR and public relations is one of the key performance indicators for their CEOs. 'They've got to market, they've got to front up for their ministry. They've got to maintain a positive public image, it is a responsibility, almost a corporate responsibility, of the CEO to maintain a good public, corporate image of their respective ministries and departments. It is there, it is a driver for them.' (Chief Information Officer, MICMR)

MICMR can assist individual departments with media awareness training and capacity building.

The Chief Information Officer believes that the ideal model for individual ministries to follow is the Prime Minister's office:

The model with a press secretary, they have a very media-active CEO they are very proactive, they manage their own advertisements; well they come to us for research, we work together, we provide the nuts and bolts sometimes. The Prime Minister just went to Africa for the African Caribbean Pacific leaders meeting and we provided the press officer, the cameraman, so we support the prime minister's office. We have to, that's the leader of government. The press releases or media is driven by the CEO of the PM's office (in line with the new public sector structures) and so the Prime Minister's office will release all their own statements.

Other government departments producing media content on a regular basis are the Ministry of Health (the National Centre for Health Promotion, or NCHP), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF). To date most of the government departments, including the ministries of Women, Foreign Affairs and Trade rely on the various sections of the MICMR. At the time of the research, there were 22 ministries.

Human resources

There is one staff member within the Prime Minister's office who is assigned to media liaison. The Prime Minister's office has its own budget for advertising and publishing statements. The Office of the President does not have a press secretary, and its CEO/Secretary issues statements through the MICMR.

The MICMR has 17 officers in the Information Services unit divided among news, public affairs and production (includes photography, publications and radio).

The FTU has 14 production staff and four support staff, including four television producer/journalists and one radio officer (who produces the Fijian program; the Hindustani program is a translation of this). The other nine staff are technical editors, camera operators and engineering staff. One is the assignment editor, who develops weekly plans of what is happening. The head of the unit has been there since 1984 and three others since 1992 (salary levels are better than industry and the FTU has the best television facilities in the country). Students from FIT and USP (journalism) also come for attachments.

The Ministry of Agriculture has 18 officers, five in radio and television, five in print, two technicians, two library attendants, two secretaries, and a messenger and driver.

The Ministry of Health has a social marketing officer, a multimedia unit with four officers, an archivist, a research officer, a community organisation development officer and a Peace Corps volunteer assisting both the social marketing and research units.

The RFMF has 10 officers including photographers, a graphic artist, journalists and a webmaster. The staff at the Media Cell is divided into the front desk, information officers and the information support team. The front desk consists of a receptionist with clerical and IT skills, who also doubles as an information officer. Usually there are up to five serving military personnel based at the Media Cell as information officers, who have some IT skills and have had past experience in public information operations. They are supplemented by up to 60 other RFMF personnel around the country who have undergone some form of training.

3.2 Government media processes

MICMR provides information aimed at disseminating key government policies, programs and concerns. These programs include the use of media releases, radio programs in the vernacular languages of Fijian and Hindustani, magazine format television programs in the three major languages, media conferences (event based), newspaper supplements, ad hoc publications such as fact sheets, and the official Fiji Government website. The website, launched in September 1998, is updated each working day with press releases, news briefs, speeches and national issues of importance, and currently has 4552 pages. The website, along with email, has become one of the ministry's main means of disseminating information on government policies, programs and activities.

The FTU produces three programs for broadcast on Fiji One TV: Dateline Fiji, Voqa-ni-Davui and Sitara. Dateline Fiji is televised at 5 pm three Sundays a month, Voqa-ni-Davui and Sitara are televised at 11.35 am each alternate Sunday. The program format of Dateline Fiji is largely magazine style with a mixture of event-oriented segments focusing on the country's socio-economic progress, national infrastructure developments, promotion of culture and traditions, agriculture, tourism, health, education and affirmative action. Programs have also covered national reconciliation and human interest segments. Voqa Ni Davui (Fijian language) and Sitara (Hindustani language) both provide analysis of government initiatives and rural development initiatives.

Hansard is readily available, and is also posted on the government website. As mentioned, Fiji One TV and FBCL both carry live broadcasts of parliamentary proceedings.

The MICMR also actively monitors the media and advises ministers on responses to media reports. The Deputy-Secretary said:

Staff come in the morning and read/view the daily media and cull reports of interest and send them to Ministers and CEOs with recommendations for responses. This has been happening for 12 months and is done three times a day.

3.3 Government department media content

In 2003 MICMR produced 135 statements from the Cabinet office; 192 radio programs, Voqa-ni-Davui (Radio Fiji One);²⁹ 192 radio programs, Nav Rashtra (Radio Fiji Two); 12 newspaper

supplements; and four 'Whole-of-Government' quarterly fact sheets. It also enlarged the website with additional pages on specific issues, such as the 2004 budget. Another 36 Dateline programs, 24 Voqa-ni-Davui programs and 24 Sitara programs were telecast; 15 in-depth news features were distributed to the print media, mostly centring around government's efforts to enhance rural development projects; and 384 media monitors (media monitoring reports) were provided to all members of Cabinet. Information officers and photographers toured with ministers of Cabinet to meetings in Ba, Ra, Lomaiviti and Macuata and Cabinet statements and press releases were issued from the venues of the meetings.³⁰

Another aspect of the FTU's functions is archival preservation and restoration. It is the repository of 'national memory' in the audiovisual standards. The Technical section coordinates all production and post-production activities at the FTU as well as day-to-day operations in consultation with MICMR management.

The RFMF Media Cell's role is to coordinate any media releases and anything that the RFMF thinks can help in relation to the public. The Officer in Charge said, 'It is important for us to keep a good relation and good rapport with the media.' The Media Cell promotes new initiatives and programs, like the 'Army for Life' concept. Media production includes the official RFMF website, <http://www.rfmf.mil.fj>, as well as brochures, electronic presentations on RFMF activities, and still and moving imagery (documentation). The latest development is a monthly newsletter, *Mataivalu*, aimed at informing the RFMF and educating the public of RFMF policies and activities. The Officer in Charge said this is in line with the Commander of the RFMF's aim for transparency and accountability.

RFMF had a program called Cavuikalawa on the FBCL, where the Commander could advise people on security issues. The program was based on questions put to the Commander from the general public, but it was discontinued in mid-2004 due to a lack of funding.

Agriculture produces weekly content for the newspapers; a farmers' newspaper that contains mostly technical information for the farmers, agriculturalists and exporters; and radio programs for farmers and television segments for Dateline on Fiji One TV. The Ministry plans to seek assistance from USP with producing video documentaries.

Agriculture initially produced five radio programs a week (15 minutes each) in English and Hindustani. In the last two years this has doubled to ten radio programs because it has diversified the content of the programs. For example, it supplies the FBCL with radio programs on youth and agriculture, and on women and agriculture, in addition to its other agriculture programs.

In March 2004 the Ministry began broadcasting on the CFL PSB station, Radio Sargam, catering to rural areas in Fiji. Agricultural news is also placed on the government website, and agriculture stories published in the *Fiji Times* go on the *Fiji Times* website.

The NCHP the Ministry of Health utilises the following media forms:

- 15-minute program with Radio Fiji One and Radio Fiji Two every Sunday;
- Television commercial campaign on Fiji One TV (up to three campaigns a year);
- Television productions to Community Television Nadi (when operational) and the religious television station, TBN;
- Commercial campaigns on CFL radio stations and newspapers;
- A quarterly newsletter, the *Health Express*;
- Press releases to coincide with World Health Day and other significant global health campaigns, including World Population Day, World AIDS Day, World No Tobacco Day;
- Posters, stickers and brochures;
- Cinema advertising;
- Outdoor advertising (billboards).

Program Managers in the Ministry of Health are responsible for communicating with the news media if and when there is an outbreak of a particular virus or disease.

The Healthy Islands Communication Network (HIC-Net) is a regional website that is being developed and will be housed at the NCHP. The purpose of the website will be to facilitate the sharing of information and campaign materials between the regional partner countries with a specific focus on non-communicable diseases that are a critical health concern across the Pacific Island region. This website is separate from the Ministry of Health's website.

Government media content is produced in English, Fijian and Hindustani depending on the media and target audience.

3.4 Media governance priorities

According to the MICMR Corporate Plan 2004, media outputs for the Information Services division in 2004 are defined by the government's national development plans:

- January: ICT
- February: Rural and outer island development
- March: Employment and the labour market, land and resource development and management
- April: Environment, small and micro-enterprises, manufacturing and commerce; commerce and finance assistance and government contracts and licences
- May: Housing and urban development, reform of state institutions, foreign affairs and external trade; public enterprise reforms (landowners encouraged in equity ownership/employment, etc)
- June: Health; law and order; marine resources; tourism; rural health service and participation of Fijians in health service delivery
- July: Sugar, non-sugar crops and livestock; forestry; resource-based industries; landowner benefit from land resources; Fijian participation in sugar industry
- August: Sport development; disaster mitigation and management; tourism
- September: Gender and development; youth and protection of children; poverty alleviation; culture and heritage
- October: Social justice and affirmative action; education and training; the blueprint and government policy for the enhancement of indigenous Fijians/Rotumans in commerce and business
- November: Minerals and groundwater resources; financial services; Fijian education
- December: Transport; energy; water and sewerage

The NCHP's governance issue is HIV/AIDS, and it has an ongoing focus on non-communicable diseases, as well as basic water and sanitation problems, which remain critical concerns within Fiji's development context.

Agriculture cited agricultural business, crop development, farming technologies and consumer food nutrition.

3.5 Target audiences

MICMR targets all Fijians, and has the most developed media monitoring system of the Pacific Island governments surveyed. As noted earlier, MIMCR has media monitors who register which media are using its statements. The monitors also provide feedback to government on public issues that appear in the news media.

Agriculture's initial target audience was only farmers but, according to the Principal Agriculture Officer, this has changed:

Today, we have different stakeholders like students doing degree programs in Agriculture at USP, women participating in agricultural business, exporters exporting local produce overseas, agro-based industries setting up in Fiji. I recently attended a conference in the Netherlands where they were discussing about different stakeholders/different target audiences and how we can disseminate information to them. This is a challenge for us because we have to translate our materials in to the three languages [Fiji, Hindustani and English].

The Principal Agriculture Officer also said:

We may write a story about a successful farmer in Sigatoka and if the story is published in the Fiji Times, we know that other farmers would pick up the technology the successful farmer is using and adopt it. But I also know from experience that most farmers cannot read English and so to solve this problem, I came up with the idea of publishing a 'farmers newspaper' which we produce in all the three languages.

Health's target audiences are defined by the specific issue and the research undertaken for each health campaign. A representative focus group is consulted on which media is most suited to them (radio, newspaper or television), and which language the information needs to be delivered in.

The focus group is also involved in pre-testing the media campaign before it is launched officially. At the end of each campaign, an evaluation process is coordinated, once again through the research unit.³¹

The RFMF targets the public in general.

3.6 Qualifications and training

MICMR prefers to employ officers who have a journalism and/or communications degree. The Chief Information Officer said, 'You need someone that's well rounded and I think the graduates that are coming out of USP are.' Information Services has seven officers with a Bachelor of Arts (six from USP, one overseas) and four officers with journalism majors (three in other disciplines). The FTU has one officer with a diploma and units in an MA program (film and television production, Australia). MICMR officers are encouraged to participate in media workshops so that they can exchange information and ideas with their peers in the industry.

The head of FTU nominated the following training areas: scriptwriting for television and radio, magazine and documentary formats rather than news; voice microphone techniques; presentation skills (three languages). Currently officers are more comfortable in English. He said further training in engineering and camera techniques with refresher courses on framing, lighting and sound recording were also needed.

As part of the public sector reform program, it has been proposed that Deputy-Secretaries are also Media Liaison Officers (MLOs):

These MLOs will need training in media handling skills, management, crisis management, general public awareness/relations and being pro-active in managing media issues ... [For MLOs] One of the things that you would need is that they actually have an understanding and appreciation of basically having a free media. I get invited to Government workshops and I'm having to explain the basic concept. Once they get that right then liaising with the media it won't be such an obstacle. (Chief Information Officer)

In 2002 the Cabinet, Prime Minister and the parliamentarians undertook a two-day course on media awareness funded by the AusAID-funded Pacific Media Initiative and coordinated by the Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association (PIBA, now PINA). The Deputy-Secretary said there is a need for more courses because this was only an introductory course:

It needs to be a quarterly programme, for MLOs, so that you can take it forward, two days a quarter, upping the ante every time, in content, but to me it will still be basic, media appreciation, the needs of the media, they need to be proactive in their roles, rather than fire-fighting ... That is what we have to factor in for the MLOs. To me it is like press secretary, public relations training, get them to understand and appreciate the media environment and increase capacity to provide regular, reliable information consistently.

The RFMF currently has only one officer with a formal qualification in journalism (USP). The rest of the officers are infantry soldiers. Selection was conducted by the Chief of Public Information, who personally interviewed and recruited personnel over the period 2001–02 based on the skill sets required and the competence and willingness of the individuals concerned. With the exception of one Territorial soldier, all the staff were serving in the Regular Force at the time of their selection. At the completion of their respective projects, personnel return to the parent units.

The information officers have all received training through workshops run by the RFMF, the Ministry of Information and local media agencies. RFMF was a workshop participant in two media training workshops organised by the National Council of Women Fiji in 2001 and 2002 (funded by the Pacific Media Initiative).

Training needs identified include familiarisation and practical experience in developing and coordinating public awareness campaigns using print, television, radio and other electronic media. Skills developed are then put to use in educating the internal and external audiences.

The RFMF does not have the residual capacity to conduct follow-up training for the information officers and has had to rely on the goodwill of the various media agencies in this regard.

In addition to normal duties, all personnel need to attend to regimental functions, including ceremonial and security duties.

Prior to 1979 the Ministry of Agriculture had staff with industry experience in writing and newsletter production. However, the ministry found technical knowledge lacking and needed to find a balance. In 1979 it recruited the two graduates with diplomas in agriculture from USP. The

ministry now has a good balance of officers, some with an agriculture background and some with a journalism background, as well as officers with backgrounds in both:³²

It's a mixture. We have an officer here with a background in graphics design and one with a Diploma in Hindustani language. We have a person who can translate in to different languages and even type in Hindustani script. We have technicians who know how to record. We have people who know how to take photographs. In terms of technology, nobody here has any formal qualifications. It's all on-the-job experience. But we do have two graduates here from the USP Journalism. (Principal Agriculture Officer)

The Principal Agriculture Officer has conducted in-house training on media and agriculture. Officers are also sent to USP or overseas on government scholarships:

I was sent to Australia on an AusAID government scholarship to do communication, journalism and media production. This is an area where we are weak in, the capacity building, because in Fiji, the courses on multimedia production and graphic design are only available at certificate level.

The Principal Agriculture Officer went on to say:

The field that we are in [media and communication], it changes. Computer softwares change every three months and computers have to be changed every three years. So while changes in technology is revolving, what about the changes in human capacity to absorb the changes. We have to keep up with the developments in technology and that is why our staff have to attend the training courses in the new ICT otherwise we'll be left behind.³³

Producing effective programs for target audiences was another area he identified for training:

Before, we only used to produce radio programs for one radio station (Radio Fiji). Now we have so many FM stations broadcasting in the three languages so our staff needs to have the skills to produce and present programs that will appeal to the listeners. I understand Fiji TV will shortly set up a public television station. So we need to train people now to get ready for this; how to use a camera, how to speak in front of a camera, how to hold a microphone and you know we Pacific Islanders are very shy people and so all these skills is needed for a better dissemination of information.

All NCHP staff have medical backgrounds as nurses and health inspectors, for example, and no one has media experience or training. This is a critical capacity-building need identified for the unit. The Social Marketing Officer has a degree in marketing from the USP; the graphic designer has formal qualifications from the FIT and the University of Central Queensland, and the video editor has no formal training or qualifications.

Officers from the NCHP have attended short courses conducted by the SPC and World Health Organization (WHO). One officer was in Japan for community organisational development and communication training at the time of the survey.

NCHP's Social Marketing Officer said that the production equipment is under-utilised because of limited staff skills. He listed the following as training priorities: technical production training for local staff, especially utilising digital production equipment; social marketing training including production skills (photography, editing); basic technical production training (camera operation, editing); and video post-production

3.7 Equipment

MICMR described itself as well equipped with computers, its own local area network (it does not go through the ITC, the government system) and has its own server. It said the ideal set-up for the MLOs would be a laptop, computer with internet and email access, a printer, a small tape recorder, a small camera and a small fax machine.

The photography section recently acquired two Kodak digital cameras and uses the Research Unit's computer to download the images and then burn them onto CDs for archival recording.

The FTU is working on the transition from analogue to digital technology, which will include transferring archival material to digital DV-CAM. The FTU was about to undergo a large technical upgrade (video and television) funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). But the Head of the Unit said there are always annual equipment needs, for example, digital broadcasting equipment to provide top technical quality programs to the FBCL. The Head of the Unit said the FTU could be producing more documentaries, one per quarter, but they are stretched

producing the three programs that they presently do, needing more producers and technical support staff.

The Ministry of Agriculture has telephone and fax access to most of its offices outside Suva. The Principal Agriculture Officer said it used old equipment, such as tape recorders, and it has only two digital cameras:

There's a demand now for ICT. People want to receive information fast through the internet, but we don't have the facilities at the moment for this ... We are in the process of buying a digital video camera. We have a few computers with internet access through Govnet (government controlled and monitored internet access). We have a recording studio where we record materials for radio but it needs to be upgraded so that we can record voice. At the moment, our staff have to read the script and we cannot access outside studios for this. With video, we also intend to have our own video studio. But for the moment, we have access to the Ministry of Information's video recording equipment. We take them out to the field and they take the footage and do the editing but at a time that is convenient to them.

The Principal Agriculture Officer added:

If we had laptops and mobile phones, then we can send the stories in from the field. Also, because of some of the rough terrains in the rural areas and the geographical spread of the islands, we spend about a week in the field and return to Suva to compile the stories and by the time it's ready, the news story is already stale. We have telephone and fax access to most of the offices outside Suva and we don't have a problem with that.

The NCHP said it had the most advanced technical production unit (radio and television) in government. However, the production equipment for promotional campaigns is under-utilised because of limited staff skills. Internet access is allocated on an hourly basis to each officer in the unit. Information from rural and outlying islands, especially when there is an outbreak of a disease or medical alert, is coordinated via telephone through the Senior Divisional Medical Officer or local contacts involved in community development projects that are related to health.

The RFMF has recorders to record audio and provides the audio to the radio stations (for post-production and broadcast), as well as computers, internet access and a website. The Media Cell does not have the capacity to extend its current media production due to the lack of qualified staff and specialised equipment.

3.8 Government–media relationships

The Deputy-Secretary of MICMR said of government–media relations:

I think it cuts both ways, government has a responsibility to do a government education process for the media, and its incumbent on the journalists to also know their stuff, about governance issues, policies, strategic plans, corporate plans, I am afraid to say that some of our journalists, they walk in cold. Part of it has got to do with training, qualifications, if you have qualified journalists, say from the university journalism, you would probably get more analytical treatment rather than just rote reporting. There's no analysis, no in-depth reporting.

The Social Marketing Officer in the NCHP said that there needs to be a greater understanding of the work and role of the NCHP. He said the NCHP is 'contacted more by the sales and marketing division of media organisations for advertising campaigns, rather than the newsrooms'. He also felt some consideration should be given to reduced advertising rates for health campaigns as the corporate rates are high. NCHP would also like to be invited to media training workshops and to participate in the Editors' Forum organised by the Fiji Media Council.

RFMF's Officer in Charge commented:

We have also been invited to some of the newsrooms ... I have only been here for about three or four years now and I've noticed the turnover in reporters and that's basically you go in the first time and brief a set of reporters and think they will be there for one or two years, and then I get asked the same questions, about the same issues, from journalists from these same media organisations, and that has made me realise the high turnover in some of the newsrooms.

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

- There is not an adequate government media liaison network. As a result of the public sector reform, which has created new 'ways of work' for the civil servants in charge of each

government ministry, MICMR does not coordinate the other government information units or officers. They work independently with their own core responsibilities. This means that there is not a consistent whole-of-government communications strategy and, while some departments provide accessible, timely information, this is not the case with all departments.

- The need for each department to have a clearly identifiable spokesperson, who can speak with authority and is accessible to the media, was raised. CEOs' contracts now include key performance indicators such as public relations. This means that CEOs, as well as their second-in-charge, will be responsible for liaising with the media, and this should assist to ease what was referred to as 'the information bottleneck', and an over-dependence on MICMR. A spokesperson with this level of authority will also reduce what one news director referred to as 'the room for error', when less experienced officers provide the information.

The changes in the public sector leadership has also meant that many of the CEOs need assistance not only to develop a working partnership across all media, but also to familiarise themselves with the opportunities within each media organisation on program and content development to channel their information, aside from just press releases. This was reiterated by the General Manager of CFL, who noted that many government departments tend to undertake a more traditional use of the media, rather than responding to the actual available formats, especially in radio.

- The government information and media network should be revived and strengthened. At one point the government system had an MLO network in which every government ministry had to have a media liaison officer who would link up with the Ministry of Information. The MLO network ensured a coordinated approach to information and communication strategies, while also enabling the MLOs to develop their own campaigns and activities. The Ministry of Information also facilitated workshops and meetings to try to enhance that network.

The revived network could also include a human resource and capacity-building component for the various media units, including recruitment guidelines, which need to be consistent across the government sector. This would also improve and enhance technical outputs, thus ensuring a more coordinated approach to training, as well as access to technical resources, in particular. With strengthened capacity, CEOs or their designated staff would also be able to provide good advice to their ministers on media practices and processes. Reviving the MLO network could serve as an important model for other regional governments.

- Lack of understanding of and definition for public sector broadcasting is a cross-sectoral issue of concern, given the ongoing changes especially in the broadcast media environment. There is clearly a need for the government sector to be better informed about public service broadcasting in order to better utilise this as a tool for their information dissemination.

The FBCL CEO said currently there is no system in place as part of the PSB contract process to identify priority development or thematic issues, which PSB content could address. There are instead some very general categories in the contract. Involving the government departments (not just the MICMR) in the negotiation of the PSB contracts, as well as other relevant stakeholders, would increase the transparency of the contract negotiations, and encourage a more strategic program approach. Such an approach should also take into account available audience survey data, so that programs can be targeted more effectively.

A better definition of PSB should also ensure that airtime for marginalised groups, such as the disabled and rural communities, is provided, and promote gender equality provisions.

- Sustainable government media production requires a regular budget allocation. This funding needs to include all key departments, not just the traditional three, Education, Health and Agriculture.
- The process of recruitment from within by government departments has resulted in the recruitment or assignment of non-media personnel into media positions. While those recruited may be committed personnel, they lack specific media training or formal qualifications and this is a critical capacity-building issue. This can lead to considerable frustration for the media as the officers do not have enough knowledge about how the media operates. There also seems to be little professional development for these officers. They are expected to learn on the job, and may or may not have access to occasional media training activities. While some departments have the capacity to provide in-house training, there is generally an over-reliance on outside funded activities when and if they are available.

The recruitment requirements for officers working with the media would benefit from being standardised across government, so that capacity is more even. This would include duty statements that list the officers' media duties, and a workplan.

- There is also a need to produce and disseminate a social marketing/media advocacy manual for the government sector. The manual could include information and advice on media training, including production skills (camera skills, editing), as well as advice on recruitment and management advice on information and communications personnel.
- It would be valuable to facilitate a cross-sectoral stakeholders' workshop or series of seminars on common development and good governance issues. This process would also be vital to enhance the understanding of all stakeholders in relation to PSB, as well as existing government processes in relation to legislation and regulatory matters.
- The government media units and information officers need to be given assistance to enhance production capacity. Skills training could be coordinated through the MICMR, the FTU as well as the NCHP, where technical production facilities are available. Training could be offered according to the skills base of the government media units.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

The Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) is the umbrella body of all NGOs in Fiji and it has 229 affiliates. Of the 229 NGOs, around 17 produce regular media content. The Executive Director of FCOSS said:

Most of the NGOs in Fiji have not given media a priority because they feel anything they do well, they feel excited about it themselves and they think everyone else will also be excited about their work. But this is not the case. How can you expect other people to know about your work when you don't publicise it? Just being excited about projects is not good enough. You have to tell the people who you are and what you are doing.

The following media-producing NGOs were available to be interviewed during the survey period: the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO), FCOSS, the Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECEA); the National Council of Women Fiji (NCWFiji), the Citizens Constitutional Forum (CCF), fem'LINKpacific, the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC); the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI), the Fiji Nursing Association (FNA) and the Fiji Media Watch Group (FMW).

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

The Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO) produces a bi-monthly newsletter, *PIANGO Link*, a website and monthly electronic updates. The governance focus includes human rights such as indigenous rights; women's and children's rights; self-determination, especially of French Polynesian countries; economic and trade issues; environment and development issues; law, order and security; and major public policies that are of importance to individual countries or the region as a whole.

FCOSS produces a bi-monthly newsletter called the *Civil Society Forum* and has a website. FCOSS focuses on a lot of issues and these include poverty, human rights and development.

ECEA produces newsletters, a website and press releases, and contributes regular features to the newspapers and a segment on the fem'LINKpacific community radio. All its publications are based on governance issues such as human rights, economic and trade policies in Fiji, the environment, law and order, security issues, good governance and corruption, poverty, reconciliation and development issues.

ECEA's Information and Communication Program Coordinator said:

Our media role is very important because ECEA is a research focus NGO and we conduct a lot of research. It is our duty to educate and inform people about government's policies and the actual impact it would have on them. To do this we have to disseminate information. If people are not well informed on these issues then the government will get away with so many things.

NCWFiji issues press releases for its 40 affiliates, makes weekly appearances on Radio Sargam (CFL) and has produced two television documentaries. Content covered includes education and training

on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), legal literacy, HIV/AIDS, and the government's implementation of the National Women's Plan of Action, and advocacy.

CCF has a website and strong advocacy in the mainstream media through press releases, press conferences and regular newspaper opinion columns. CCF contributes five to six letters weekly to letters to the editor, and takes part in radio talkback shows and television programs. Issues include human rights, governance, corruption, and economic and trade issues. The Executive Director said, 'Our role is of a watch dog and we talk on a number of governance issues. This includes corruption, Constitution, land, human rights, economics and trade and rule of law.' The Executive Director added:

CCF has a very important role. We are media people by the very nature of our work. Strengthening democratic institutions through the full implementation of the provisions of the 1997 Constitution, building multiculturalism and an understanding of human rights, and seeking a more proportional and fairer electoral system have been the central concerns of CCF's work since the adoption of the 1997 Constitution. So to inform and educate people we need to have a media face.

The NGO Coalition of Human Rights is an umbrella body of 14 NGOs that mostly deal with human rights issues.³⁴ The organisation's Secretariat is based at the CCF. While the Coalition does not produce much media content, it is very active in advocating human rights issues in the mainstream media through press releases, being guests on television and radio talkback shows and contributing to letters to the editor.

fem'LINKpacific is a major media-producing NGO that works with a number of other women's NGOs in Fiji. It produces a monthly e-news bulletin targeting regional and international contacts as it does not have a website; media action and women's media action alerts and postings to women's program producers and presenters in mainstream news media and to women's media networks; and a monthly women's community radio broadcast in Suva with its own mobile women's community radio project, fem'TALK 89.2FM. It also develops and produces mainstream radio campaigns in partnership with other women's groups such as ISIS Manila, as well as part of its community radio project; develops, produces and distributes community videos; and produces and distributes a quarterly regional women and peace magazine, printing 300 copies.

fem'LINK's Coordinator said its media initiatives are designed to:

Empower women to not only understand their social, political and civil rights but to assist them to understand how these principles of human rights impact on their daily lives, and women just like them in communities across Fiji; provide women's groups around Fiji, with an advocacy and awareness tool that will assist them in devising appropriate strategies for action to address their concerns and problems, in particular the social issues linked in with the rise in poverty at both local [community] and national level; share critical areas of concern with our government, development and civil society partners in order to assist them develop a better appreciation and understanding of the perspective of the women's movement and the women's peace movement; contribute towards the process of reconciliation in the country as we share common stories and experiences of women from various communities in an effort to break down the barriers that lead to racial intolerance.

PCRC produces the monthly *Pacific News Bulletin* (500 copies), monthly media releases on various campaigns and the PCRC website. PCRC concentrates on human rights issues, sustainable development, trade and economic issues, environment and security.

FSPI, which has a regional secretariat based in Suva, has a website containing information about FSPI and its network of 10 Pacific Island organisations. It also has a monthly electronic newsletter, *FSP Eye*. FSPI mainly focuses on issues such as health, environment, good governance development issues, land, water, poverty and human rights.

FSPI's Executive Director said:

We see our media role as very important. Part of our strategic plan is to develop our media capacity. It is one of our four rocks. We have decided four areas that we will spend our money, time and effort, fundraise on in the future and these include programme development, capacity building in our network and enhancing our media capacity.

The Fiji Nursing Association (FNA) produces an annual magazine, *Isa Nasi*, and press releases for media when required. Member nurses are also guests on weekly health programs on almost

all radio stations located in Suva. Governance issues covered include domestic problems, HIV/AIDS, non-communicable diseases, nutrition, cleanliness and any other information listeners are interested in. FNA focuses on workers' rights, in particular nurses' rights, nurses' salaries and working conditions. FNA also writes on health issues and new health policies, and informs and educates the public on various health problems and diseases.

The Fiji Public Service Association (FPSA) is a trade union organisation of civil servants in Fiji. It has more than 3000 members and, while FPSA does not have a website or a newsletter, it has a very strong presence in the mainstream media. FPSA issues press releases on an almost daily basis on labour rights, corruption or abuse of public funds, governance, economic issues and government policies on labour and poverty. FPSA is also sought by the media regularly for alternative views on current issues affecting the country.

The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) produces quarterly national and regional newsletters and press releases, holds press conferences and has a website. FWCC also has a strong presence in the media. It has been in existence for 20 years and is an NGO advocating women's human rights on issues such as violence against women, poverty, rights of children, good governance, health and economic issues.

The Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG) has a website, produces press releases, holds press conferences and also contributes regular opinion columns to the newspapers. PANG mostly deals with economic and trade issues and globalisation and its effects on Pacific Island countries.

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) produces newsletters, press releases and opinion columns in the newspapers, and holds press conferences. FWRM mostly deals with women's and children's human rights issues, poverty, governance, economic and health issues.

FMW produces a quarterly newsletter (reduced numbers in 2004 due to lack of personnel) and regular press releases, and it has a website. It mostly deals with media monitoring and media education. FMW's focus is empowering the general public with the ability to think with media awareness and monitoring skills.

Greenpeace Pacific produces newsletters, a website and press releases and runs press conferences. The organisation mainly deals with environmental issues.

FRIENDS is an organisation operating in the Western Division of Fiji's largest island Viti Levu. It produces newsletters, press releases and press conferences. It carries out micro-enterprise and small business training for elderly people in rural areas. Major issues it deals with are poverty and economic matters.

Some of the media-producing NGOs listed above were not available for interview, and therefore further details on these NGOs are not listed below.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

PIANGO's main target audience is its National Liaison Units (NLUs). The NLUs are NGO focal points or coordinating bodies based in 22 Pacific Island countries and non-self-governing territories. PIANGO also sends publications to donors and other regional counterparts.

FCOSS targets affiliates, donors, communities and partners. It sends an annual questionnaire to its 229 members, donors and partners, asking their views on its newsletter and what improvements they want. The Executive Director said:

However, the sad thing is that hardly anybody sends us back the feedback. It's only when we meet people during seminars and conferences; then they tell us that they enjoyed reading our newsletter. According to them 'no news is good news'. They tell us they will only write to us when we are doing something bad.

ECREA targets ordinary people (grassroots) and the government.

NCWFiji targets the public at large, and tries to gender-sensitise the public.

CCF targets people at the grassroots level and the government.

fem'LINK targets the grassroots population, including children, rural women, regional and international contacts, mainstream news media, women's program producers and presenters and women's media networks. fem'LINK also wants to highlight women's voices to the policy makers so they can engage in policy dialogue, for example, as a member of the Ministry of Women's task force on shared decision making.

PCRC's main targets are the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific members in 30 countries, including the Pacific Islands and Japan. It also sends publications to donors and other regional counterparts.

FSPI targets communities at grassroots level.

FNA's media content focuses on nurses, the public and the government.

With the exception of FCOSS, the NGOs do not have a formal process for evaluating the impact of their media content. They do, however, rely on a range of informal feedback mechanisms such as school visits, talks, workshops, letters and calls from people, and personal interaction.

The fem'LINK Coordinator commented that:

It is hard to gauge the immediate impact especially with the limited resources we have had but the process of media advocacy is also one about empowerment for change so we cannot say there has been a 25 per cent increase in women's voices being heard ... but we are sure that by creating an enabling [media and policy] environment things can only improve ... So it is more about consistency; we tried to get women's groups to send us a response form ... Follow up and evaluation requires interpersonal communication so that is why we created the community viewing session forums for whenever we release a video; at least we can gauge some immediate response to the productions.

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4.4

NGO media capacity

PIANGO has a full-time Circulations and Documentations Officer.

FCOSS does not have a full-time media officer. All media work is done by the Executive Director. The FCOSS Executive Director can spend 10 to 15 hours a week on media production and liaison. In regards to staff turnover:

From my point of view the turnover rate of staff in NGOs is very high. FCOSS had three media staff and they all went away. The first one left after a year because he got a better offer at Fiji Media Watch, the second left his FJ\$7000 salary here and went to Secretariat of the Pacific Community for a tax free package at FJ\$18,000. I didn't even try to stop him because I know FCOSS will never be able to afford that salary. It took me 10 years to get that much at FCOSS. Volunteers are also for a short period of time. Money is a big issue here. NGOs cannot afford to attract highly skilled media people and they also cannot not afford to retain the ones they train because once trained these people became marketable and are easily poached by someone else.

ECREA has no full-time media officer. It has five programs and each of the five officers responsible for these is also responsible for their own media production as part of their other duties. ECREA said the amount of time each officer spends on media production varies from week to week depending on issues and information that need to be disseminated, but on average it is four to eight hours a week.

NCWFiji has no full-time media officer. Media liaison is the responsibility of the Secretary and the President.

CCF's seven officers all share media production duties as part of their work. But most of the media work is done by the Executive Director and the Director of Programs. CCF estimates that its officers spend an average of 15 to 20 hours a week on media production and liaison.

NGO Coalition of Human Rights does not have a full-time media officer. The Executive Director of CCF is also the Chairperson of the Coalition. He does the media work.

fem'LINK does not have a full-time media officer. Media work is done by the Coordinator, along with her other duties.

PCRC has an information desk, which is the clearing house of all information. It has four full-time officers involved in media production: an editor, translator, information officer and a librarian.

FSPI has an Australian Youth Ambassador as a full-time media officer.

FNA does not have a full-time media officer. All media work is handled by the General-Secretary and the Vice-President. FNA media work can vary from none in some weeks to days writing press releases and responding to the media when there is an industrial dispute involving its members. The weekly radio program on the FBCL and CFL stations are usually organised by the presenter of

the program. The recording and the editing is done by the radio stations but the nurses research the topics they are being interviewed on.

FPSA has no full-time media officer. All media work is done by the General-Secretary.

FWCC has a full-time communications officer.

PANG does not have a full-time media officer. All media work is done by the PANG Coordinator who has a degree in journalism from USP.

FWRM used to have a full-time communications officer. All media work is currently handled by the FWRM Coordinator, who is a former broadcast journalist.

FMW does not have a full-time media officer in this organisation. However, one media education officer and five volunteers who are members of FMW share the task of preparing the FMW newsletter and updating the website. FMW said about two to three hours a week is spent on newsletter production and updating the website.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

Some officers from the NGOs have attended short media training courses (fem'LINK, NCWF, PCRC and FMW); while others have conducted media skills workshops for NGOs (FSPI, fem'LINK, NCWFiji, ECREA, FCOSS and FMW).

PIANGO requires a degree or diploma in journalism for its Circulations and Documentation Officer position.

FCOSS's Executive Director has a degree in communications and, before joining the NGO, used to work with an Islamic newspaper in Pakistan. 'I must tell you that having media experience has really helped me in my NGO work. I have no problem writing news releases, recognising issues and dealing with journalists.'

ECREA's preferred qualification would be training and experience in journalism and a diploma or degree in journalism, if it had a media officer. With the exception of the Information and Communication Programs Coordinator (who has attended one short course), none of the five NGO campaign officers involved in media production have received any media training.

NCWFiji does not require officers with previous media experience or qualifications.

CCF's officers currently involved in media production do not have any formal qualification in journalism, but the Executive Director said a degree or diploma in journalism or communications would be sufficient.

fem'LINK's Coordinator is an experienced media producer. She said that:

Being a community media we don't have a set range of qualifications for recruitment because that is not what community media is about. We instead would be very keen to develop, train and keep motivated a team of young women who can become the key producers of our print, audio and video content with the coordinator.

PCRC's Assistant Director, Information, has a degree in journalism, but the other officers have learned on the job. The Information Officer said:

I started at the PCRC as an administrative officer but was later shifted to the media desk because of the number of years I had spent at PCRC. The story is same with the other staff as well. They have been moved from one section to another and finally ended up in media production. However, now the PCRC is looking for qualified and experienced journalists because we think this will make a difference.

It's not that that I am not doing a good job or other non-qualified media staff is not doing a good job. We just feel that things are changing now. To be at the forefront, the NGOs need to have good communication system. They need to interact more with the media and having a qualified journalist as a media person will help a lot in this area.

FSPI's Executive Director commented:

Well media is an upcoming and developing area and I think NGOs need well-qualified [someone with a degree in journalism] and skilled people to work for them. This is one area that NGOs don't do well for the simple reason because they cannot afford or rather do not have projects to support the salaries of skilled and qualified media people. This is an area that needs to be addressed. All NGOs should be aware of the importance of the media and the

positive role the media can play in development. At the moment what we have in the media is just negative news. Development is just not 'sexy' enough to be part of media drive so we have to make development attractive portfolio to make news. This is why we need qualified and skilled media people in NGOs.

FNA's General-Secretary said, 'The most important requirement that we will look for is being well versed with issues affecting the nurses and have courage to speak out against government.' Nurses appearing as guests on radio programs have not had any media training.

FMW said that if it is to have a full-time communications officer, then it would prefer someone with a degree or at least a diploma in journalism and some experience in media and communication work. However at present FMW officers who are involved in producing the newsletter and other media content do not have any journalism qualifications.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The FCOSS Executive Director felt training was essential to raise NGO media standards:

Firstly you must understand that in Fiji most NGO media officers do not have any qualification or training in media work. Many of them don't even know how to write good press releases, give interviews with journalists or how to use media to disseminate their information. FCOSS used to conduct training one-day workshops for NGOs in Fiji on how to write good press releases and giving interviews but since the formation of Fiji Media Watch we have stopped doing this. However, they are many NGOs in Fiji that have come back to us requesting for workshops on media training but the problem is funding. Media training is very vital for NGOs. There are many NGOs such as rural based women's clubs, youth groups and so on who do a lot of good work and projects but whatever lessons are learnt stays with the group because they don't know ways of disseminating it to the public or other counterparts.

ECREA said it had no immediate need for media training as its media production output is small.

NCWFiji has collaborated with NGO partners and government departments, with funding from AusAID (Pacific Media Initiative), to produce two television documentaries and peace messages on radio, which were outcomes of two workshops conducted for television and radio training for NCWFiji affiliates, NGO partners and relevant government ministries. NCWFiji needs to formulate its media priorities to assist affiliates to strengthen their relationship with the various media as an effective advocacy tool and to highlight their organisational profile. NCWFiji affiliates also need to know the basics — which form of media to use and how to prepare a media release to provide only the information required.

The CCF Executive Director said:

CCF does not have any immediate media training priorities as yet because we feel we are doing quite well in publicising and making our issues known to people. We have very good people who are very well versed with current affairs and also have good analytical skills.

fem'LINK has designed and coordinated the implementation of donor-funded and other training programs for women's NGOs. fem'LINK's Coordinator said:

There is a need for a more comprehensive media education training so CSOs can strengthen their media advocacy and also appreciate the mainstream media's role. If CSOs know how the media operates then they can better utilise the range of media forms. [There is also a need for] investment in training of young women as there are not enough equitable spaces for the voices of Pacific.

PCRC said it does not have a budget for training, and is aiming to employ more officers with journalism experience.

FSPI has engaged local consultants as trainers to conduct a two-day workshop on media skills for NGOs, which included writing good and clear press releases and giving interviews, and a radio production workshop. The Canada Fund provided funding for the projects. FSPI would like to conduct further training like this. FSPI's Executive Director said more training was required in writing press releases and giving interviews.

FMW cited additional training priorities as: workshops on any media-related issues such as media content analysis, media education and awareness, radio production and writing and editing skills.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

PIANGO has computers, internet access, publishing software (Publisher), tape recorder for interviews and a camera. The Circulations and Documentation Officer has full-time access to the internet and telephone to make regional or international calls for her work. Funds are available if there is a need for further equipment.

FCOSS has telephone, internet and computer access. Email and internet usage is limited to certain hours only. The Executive Director said FCOSS equipment was adequate and that his main concern is

the small NGOs, because they are the ones most starved of resources. You see the mother's club has potential to do a lot of things, educate and inform women on health issues such as HIV/AIDS, communicable diseases or small budgeting or even have small micro-enterprises. If these groups are given media skills and resources to produce small leaflets or newsletters it will be very helpful to their work. However, most times these groups don't have luxury of having these modern-day technologies.

ECREA has computers and internet access, but no media production equipment. It described this as adequate for its current media work.

NCWFiji has computer and internet access, but no other equipment for media production.

CCF has access to computers, internet, fax, telephone and digital cameras. The Executive Director said, 'We use a lot of internet and reply through emails and we have members all around Fiji we regularly communicate with either by phone, fax or emails.' CCF received European Union (EU) funding for equipment in 2004 and was satisfied with its equipment.

fem'LINK has a digital video camera and tripod as well as digital deck (for dump rolls, transcribing), a television, a suitcase radio with field production equipment, audio recorders, mikes and headphones, a digital still camera, three laptops, editing software, a scanner, two printers and a mobile phone. The Coordinator said, 'Basically we focused on strengthening our equipment capacity first. Since we were established in 2000 these are our critical tools for media production. Our aim is to establish a women's community media centre.'

PCRC has access to computers, internet and telephone, a digital camera, tape recorders, scanner and a colour printer. PCRC has just sought funding to buy a scanner and colour printers. It also has set up a system whereby each campaign desk allocates some funding from its budget to media production so it has funds available if needed for more equipment.

FSPI does not have equipment for recording but it has funds to purchase audiovisual production equipment. It has computer, internet access and telephones. The available facilities are unlimited for work use.

FNA has computers, internet access and phone; as the internet is quite expensive, only the General-Secretary has access. FNA can phone rural and outer islands, where it has a number of members. The General-Secretary described the equipment as adequate for the FNA's current needs, but noted that they would need more equipment if the FNA wanted to produce newsletters and a website.

FMW has limited equipment: computer and internet access, telephone and fax only.

4.8 NGO media processes

Media-active NGOs in Fiji produce a range of media: press releases, letters to the editor, newspaper articles and radio programs (mainly FBCL), and hold press conferences. Cost of access to the media, especially for advertising, is seen as high and the emphasis is on securing free coverage. Some of the Fiji NGOs listed here also appear to have developed a good working relationship with the news media, and cultivate this:³⁵

PIANGO said a paid advertisement for vacancies in *Islands Business* magazine (A4 page) costs about FJ\$1800. For a quarter page in the *Fiji Times*, PIANGO pays FJ\$520. One full-page advertisement in the *Fiji Times* cost about FJ\$1600. *Islands Business* has also approached them to advertise in the monthly development supplement pages. The cost of one-third of an A4 page would be FJ\$1080, half a page FJ\$1350 and full page FJ\$1800. The Circulations and Documentation Officer added:

We also don't go for paid write ups for supplements in newspapers and magazines because it is very costly and does not give a good image for NGOs as we are not-for-profit organisations and it would not give a good impression for us to splash money on promoting our work. We

target free pages. For promotions PIANGO usually targets free feature article pages where publication of articles depends on how newsworthy the article is.

ECREA's Information and Communication Programme Coordinator said it does not usually place paid advertisements because it gets enough media coverage for free:

The only time we took out a paid advertisement was when we presented the Draunisalato Award to organisations creating the most pollution to the environment in Fiji. This was a four-page advertisement in the Fiji Times which cost about FJ\$6000. This was very expensive but we had to advertise because we wanted the whole issue widely publicised.

fem'LINK has negotiated with FBCL, and its Coordinator said it has sometimes been able to negotiate free airtime 'but this is becoming very scarce'. Indicative rates on the FBCL Radio Fiji One and Two stations and the Bula Network stations range from FJ\$25 for 30 seconds to FJ\$135 for 5 minutes, and for the Radio Fiji stations only FJ\$175 for 10 minutes to FJ\$440 for one hour.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

fem'LINKpacific has a community radio licence for its mobile suitcase radio. However, as noted earlier, its annual licence fee is the same as the fee paid by commercial stations.

4.10 Funding for media content

PIANGO has not received funding for a specific media production but since it is a fully donor-funded NGO, a small portion of its grants are allocated to production of newsletters and managing the PIANGO website. PIANGO gets funding from the Catholic Committee Against Hunger and for Development (CCFD), NZAID, Commonwealth Foundation, Bread for the World, and the Canadian International Development Agency and United Nations Development Program (CIDA/UNDP).

ECREA receives funds mainly from church organisations such as the World Council of Churches. These funds are then allocated to different projects, including media work.

NCWFiji and fem'LINK received funding from AusAID (Pacific Media Initiative) for radio programs and the production of two television documentaries and peace messages on radio. These productions were produced as part of two training workshops.

fem'LINK has also received funding from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Pacific, UNESCO, Canada Fund, the Department for International Development (DFID) UK, ECREA, Global Ministries (USA), International Women's Development Agency, NZAID, UNDP, the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), London, the Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights, Women Waging Peace, and ISIS International, Manila.

PCRC has not received funding specifically for media, but it allocates funding to the media from each campaign. The donor-funded projects are: Demilitarisation, Decolonisation, Environment, Sustainable Development and Human Rights and Good Governance. The donors include: Bread for the World, World Council of Churches, European Centre for Study, Information and Education on Pacific Issues (ECSIEP), European Development Fund (EDF), International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), AusAID, and NZAID

FSPI received funds from the Canada Fund for an NGO radio production workshop and a media skills workshop.

FMW has received funds from the European Economic Development Fund for media education and media monitoring.

Like the PCRC, CCF has not received donor specifically for media production, but it allocates funds to media. Its donors include Council of World Mission, a global community of churches; the German Catholic Bishops' Organisation for Development Cooperation (MISEREOR); the Commonwealth Foundation; British High Commission; Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland (EMW); DIFD Pacific; NZAID; AusAID; and Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), Germany.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

- *My personal view is that instead of waiting for the media to come to the NGOs, the NGOs should find avenues to go to the media. Most NGOs are advocacy-based so it would serve them well to issue regular press releases, hold press conferences and also build very good contacts with media staff especially those who are sympathetic towards the particular NGO cause. It would also be good for NGOs to take up short media courses on how to write good*

press releases and sharp articles to catch media's attention. Learning about how the media operates such as deadlines and so on will also be helpful. (PIANGO)

- *We need to get the media more involved in our activities for example during workshops and seminars; don't just invite the media during opening or closing ceremony but encourage them to stay throughout the process so that they can understand the issues better.* (FSPI)
- *There definitely needs to be a better relationship between each other and this boils down to CSOs media education and media/press not feeling like the CSO agenda is driven by the motivation of the donor community ... practical linkages through tri-partite training and also just facilitating dialogue is important at a professional level not just based on personal agendas.* (fem'LINK)

While some NGOs said they had a reasonable to good understanding of media deadlines and content requirements, for others this was not the case:

- *Well we really don't have a person specifically in charge of media in our organisation so we are not well versed with media operations such as deadlines and current affairs. For us it's learn and improve from your mistakes situation. I guess in a way it is a hindrance because sometimes when we send our press releases to the media outlets it does not get published. Later after enquiry we find out we sent the releases very late or in other words we had missed the deadline so in a way it does cause hindrance. But often we get things right and our releases get published.* (ECREA)
- *I think this is an area that is not immediately clear among the NGO sector. We need to do more research on how the media operates and the different needs in the media. We need to find out what would attract TV, radio and print. I think radio is a very useful medium of communication in the Pacific but unfortunately it is underutilised.* (FSPI)

Other capacity-building factors identified include:

- Volunteer nature of the leadership of the NGO sector, especially at the executive level. NGOs do not always have people in authority who can respond decisively to the media in a timely manner. There is a need to develop a communications policy framework to assist NGOs to better handle not only the news media but all forms of media
- Limited technical and staff resources. There is a reliance on donors to recognise media and communications, including production of videos, radio programs and other media forms as critical and ongoing tools for advocacy. Many donors do not understand the media processes themselves and require greater education about the range of available forms of media advocacy, including community media initiatives and independent producers. Community media is a potentially valuable communication tool for reaching rural and outer island communities, and marginalised communities.
- Defining news. NGOs refer to that lack of 'newsworthiness' of the areas they work in. Quite often the issue is not so much the content, but they way it is presented to the media. Some of the news media interviewed have offered to assist with running workshops on how the media operates and what makes news, which would help.
- Limited capacity within a great number of NGOs to understand media processes. Like the government sector, the NGO and CSO sector must also be better informed about Fiji's contemporary media environment. There is a considerable reliance and use of the news media or print media, and limited understanding of broadcast media sector (including regulatory issues). Better informed NGOs could actually contribute to enhancing the broadcasting industry, as well as support and encourage public service and community-based broadcasting, especially as radio remains a vital tool for rural-based information and communications.

Others capacity-building strategies could include:

- Umbrella NGO bodies. NLUs and/or experienced media-producing NGOs that can provide advice and production resources (human, equipment and funding) to NGOs interested in producing their own media content would assist with capacity building. It is not possible or necessary for each NGO to have a number of people, funds and equipment to produce media content, and an umbrella body like this could resource the sector, particularly the less-resourced, media-capable NGOs.
- The development of an information and communications framework. While there is no 'one size fits all' formula, especially within Fiji's diverse NGO sector, what could assist NGOs to overcome

their challenges is to develop and publish an information and communication framework that would assist them improve their access to the appropriate technical and financial resources to sustain their media advocacy work.

- Develop and publish a media education guide. This media education guide is needed to create greater awareness of the nature of the media (mainstream and community-based) as well as the opportunities to strengthen advocacy. The media education guide would also provide advice on regulatory issues and legislation. If the media education guide was an interactive CD-ROM it could also deliver basic skills training to effectively harness the use of talkback radio, and for radio interview techniques, press release writing and so on.
- Support for network strengthening for the media industry, NGOs and the government sector to better define governance issues. For Fiji, for example this could be undertaken through the NGO Coalition on Human Rights and would be similar in nature to the Fiji Media Council content development training. This could involve media executives and journalists speaking at an NGO forum with the aim of building a better understanding between the two sectors and a more positive relationship. Some mainstream media are wary of what they see as an NGO agenda, and these forums could provide an opportunity to discuss these concerns.

¹ Source: *Fiji Today 2004–2005*, <http://www.fiji.gov.fj/>; Fiji country profile, <http://www.dfat.gov.au>.

² MICMR *Corporate Plan 2004*, p. 7.

³ Thomson Report, 1996, 3.1.1, p. 13.

⁴ All currencies in this chapter are in Fiji dollars. FJ\$1.00 equals approximately AU\$0.77.

⁵ The annual licence and spectrum fees also apply to the national public radio stations.

⁶ Source: 'Can't Pay Won't Pay: Community TV in Fiji Resists Broadcasting Licence Charges', Sean Hawkey, WACC, 2003.

⁷ Fiji and the Cook Islands were the only countries surveyed to have draft FOI legislation.

⁸ The Fiji Media Council also commissioned a survey of the public's perceptions of news from Tebbutt Research. This survey, funded by the UNDP, generally found that public perceptions about news production were positive, thus bolstering the industry's argument for self-regulation.

⁹ *Future Media Legislation and Regulation for the Republic of Fiji Islands*, 2.4.2.3, p. 7.

¹⁰ *Future Media Legislation and Regulation for the Republic of Fiji Islands*, 2.6.3, p. 9.

¹¹ MICMR *Corporate Plan 2004*, p. 18.

¹² See 'FBCL Wins PSP Case', Pacific Magazine online <http://pacificislands.cc./pina> for details.

¹³ Temporary agreement between the government of the Republic of Fiji and the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited, July 2004, p. 8.

¹⁴ Yasana Holdings is the front holding company for the 14 provinces and Rotuma.

¹⁵ Source: CFL Corporate Profile.

¹⁶ This situation has since changed, and the government is reportedly in the process of selling its shares to the new owner, Belmont Trading Company.

¹⁷ Source: *Airwaves*, Issue 2, September 2004.

¹⁸ Source: CFL Corporate Profile.

¹⁹ Source: http://www.sun.com.fj/FijiSunInfo/FijiSun_readers_guide.htm.

²⁰ The Fiji Journalism Institute (FJI) was run by the Fiji Islands Media Association (FIMA). It ran a basic training program for journalism cadets after work for two hours. The FJI closed down some time between 1997 and 1998 due to mismanagement.

²¹ A number of the Pacific Island countries surveyed said this is not feasible due to limited and costly email access.

²² The *Fiji Sun* was owned by Hong Kong publisher Sally Aw Sian and New Zealand publisher Philip Harkness. It closed in 1987 following the second coup. The current *Fiji Sun* commenced in 1999 with different owners.

²³ See 'Why Fiji TV was Destroyed', http://www.journalism.uts.edu.au/archive/fiji_coup/0529FijiTVDestroyed.html; 'PINA appeals to rebel leader over safety of journalists', <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/10838>; 'Fiji: Military condemned over Radio Fiji "intimidation"', Pacific Media Watch online, 21 October 2000.

²⁴ See D. Robie and S. Singh, 'From campus to newsroom in the South Pacific: Governance and the quest for a professional journalism ethos', in *Fijian Studies: A Journal of Contemporary Fiji*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp 245–65, University of the South Pacific, Suva.

²⁵ Source: www.fijimediacouncil.com.

²⁶ The Fiji Media Council's Editors' Forum is a popular, well-publicised forum for the discussion of important issues affecting Fiji. The forums include people from the media, government and civil society, and are recorded and broadcast on Fiji One TV. The Fiji Times Limited has played a leading role in organising these forums.

²⁷ The PRU travels mainly to rural areas providing direct awareness campaigns and information dissemination to communities on government policies, programs and activities.

²⁸ Source: MICMR, *Annual Report 2003*, Parliamentary paper no. 22, 2004, p. 22.

²⁹ The Fijian radio and television programs produced by the MICMR have the same name, but contain different content.

³⁰ Source: MICMR, *Annual Report 2003*, Parliamentary paper no. 22, 2004, page 22.

³¹ This is one of the few government departments surveyed in the region that is implementing a formal evaluation process of its media content.

³² Government departments in other countries surveyed have, with some exceptions, generally involved officers with expertise in their areas (and little or no media skills) to produce media content.

³³ This issue was raised by a number of government and NGO media producers in different PICs.

³⁴ Member organisations of the NGO Coalition on Human Rights include CCF, ECREA, fem'LINKpacific, Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC), Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), NCWFiji, Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT), Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO), Pacific Centre for Public Integrity (PCPI) and Greenpeace Pacific.

³⁵ This is less obvious in other Pacific Island countries where NGOs tend to focus on producing a radio program or a newsletter, and do not have regular contact with news media.

KIRIBATI

BACKGROUND

Kiribati, the former Gilbert Islands, is a collection of 33 atolls in three main groups, the Gilbert Islands, Phoenix Islands and Line Islands. Twenty of the atolls are inhabited, most are very low lying and at risk from rising sea levels. The republic occupies a vast area in the Pacific, stretching nearly 4000 km from east to west and more than 2000 km from north to south. Kiribati includes Kiritimati (Christmas Island), the largest coral atoll in the world, and Banaba (Ocean Island), one of the three great phosphate islands in the Pacific. Except on Banaba, very little land is more than three metres above sea-level.

The majority of the people are of Micronesian descent and are known as I-Kiribati. There are also very small minorities of Polynesians and non-Pacific Islanders. English is the official language of Kiribati, and many I-Kiribati speak it in addition to the vernacular language, Kiribati. The estimated population is close to 90,000 and the capital is Tarawa Atoll. Approximately 90 per cent of the population of Kiribati live on the atolls of the Gilbert Islands. Owing to an annual population growth rate of around 2.5 per cent and severe overcrowding in the capital on South Tarawa, a program of migration has been implemented to move nearly 5000 inhabitants to outlying atolls, mainly in the Line Islands.

Britain began expanding self-government in the islands during the 1960s. In 1975 the Ellice Islands separated from the colony and in 1978 became the independent country of Tuvalu. The Gilberts obtained internal self-government in 1977, and formally became an independent nation on 12 July 1979 under the name of Kiribati.

The Constitution promulgated at Independence establishes Kiribati as a sovereign democratic republic and guarantees the fundamental rights of its citizens.

The unicameral House of Assembly (Maneaba) has 42 members: 40 elected representatives, one appointed member from Banaba Island, and the Attorney-General on an ex-officio basis. All of the members of the Maneaba serve four-year terms.

After each general election, the new Maneaba nominates at least three but not more than four of its members to stand as candidates for President. The voting public then elects the President from among these candidates. A Cabinet of up to 10 members is appointed by the President from the members of the Maneaba. Although popularly elected, the President can be deposed by a majority vote in Parliament. In this case, a new election for President must be held. A person can serve as President for only three terms, no matter how short each term is.

Political parties exist but in behaviour are more similar to informal coalitions. They do not have official platforms or party structures. Most candidates formally present themselves as independents. Campaigning is by word of mouth and informal gatherings in traditional meeting houses. The biggest political issue is finding employment opportunities for a crowded and growing population.

The economy is described as weak and largely dependent on world demand for coconut. Fishing licences, foreign aid and remittances from workers abroad also play their part, as does a trust fund established with revenues from phosphate mining on the island of Banaba. The mines were depleted by 1980, leaving Banaba uninhabitable.¹ Due to Kiribati's limited domestic production ability, it must import nearly all of its essential foodstuffs and manufactured items.

Tourism is relatively small and transportation and communications are a challenge. International air links to the capital of Tarawa are provided only by the near-bankrupt Air Nauru. Air Kiribati

provides service to most of the populated atolls in the Gilbert Islands using small planes flying from Tarawa. Small ships serve outlying islands, including the Line Islands, with irregular schedules. Hawaiian Air flies to Christmas Island once a week. It is not possible to travel from the Line Islands to the Gilbert Islands by air without travelling via Hawaii and either Fiji or the Marshall Islands. Telecommunications and internet access are expensive and service is described as mediocre and very limited in outer islands.²

Data for the survey was mainly collected in December 2005, with some initial interviews completed prior to this.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Ministry of Communication, Transport and Tourism Development (MCTTD) is responsible for media and telecommunications administration, development and licensing. The relevant legislation is:

- *Broadcasting and Publication Authority Ordinance 1979* (amended 1998)
- *Radio-Communications Regulation 1998*, part of the *Telecommunication Act 1983*
- Kiribati Penal Code (Defamation) 1977
- *Newspaper Registration (Amended) Act 2004*
- Telecommunication Bill 2004.

The *Radio-Communications Regulation 1998*, Part III, deals with broadcast station licensing. There is new legislation that covers broadcasting, the *Telecommunications Bill 2004*, passed in the last sitting of Parliament in November 2004, but it is yet to be gazetted. This will replace the 1983 Act and the *Radio-Communications Regulation*. The new legislation establishes a Telecommunications Authority of Kiribati. One of its tasks will be to manage the radio spectrum and issue licences.

Section 23(1) of the Telecommunication Bill 2004 states that no person shall install, use or possess radio-communication apparatus, except in accordance with a licence issued by the Authority. It is therefore a requirement that a person or even a community group planning to establish a radio or television station must first obtain a licence from the Authority. It is possible to grant a licence for a commercial radio or television station within two years, provided all the requirements in section 24 of the Bill for radio and television are met. These are mainly technical and there are no guidelines for content requirements.

As section 12(1) of the Constitution provides for freedom of expression and information, it is possible to set up a non-profit community television or radio station in Kiribati, provided that all the requirements under the relevant legislation are met.

Under the 1988 *Newspaper Registration Act*, newspapers are required to register with the government. The government amended the Act in 2002 and included the following in section 16(1):

That nothing is printed which offends against good taste and likely to encourage crime or disorder, that the content presented with due accuracy and impartiality; where an article contains matters affecting the credibility or reputation of any person that opportunity is preserved on the part of persons named or affected by to have this response included in the said article (section 16(1) Newspaper Registration (Amendment) Act 2002.

Any newspaper breaching these requirements could be deregistered or fined by a Newspaper Complaints Commission. The Commission was established as part of the 2002 amendment. Opponents criticised the amendment as an attempt by the government to restrict press freedom.³ In 2004 this section of the Act was amended by the government; the provision for the Newspaper Complaints Commission was repealed and newspapers could not be closed for breaching section 16 of the Act.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

Freedom of speech and of the media is generally respected. As noted above, under section 12(1) of the Constitution:

... no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, and for the purpose of this section the said freedom of expression includes ... freedom to receive ideas and information without interference, and freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference ...

There is no separate freedom of information legislation.

1.3 Media regulation

The government attempted to block the setting up Kiribati's first private radio station, Newair FM89, in 2000. The directors, who included former President Ieremia Tabai, were fined for operating an unlicensed radio station during test broadcasts. They subsequently set up the station as well as the country's first private weekly newspaper, the *Kiribati Newstar*. Tabai, who is now a Member of Parliament and the Proprietor of Newair FM89 and *Newstar* said:

I never liked the last government [of Tebuburo Tito]. One of the reasons because they monopolised the media in such a way that they controlled it. I thought it was very bad in a small country like Kiribati to have one media outlet only. I didn't like the situation where the people were being fed with one side of the story only. I was blocked for about one year from starting my FM Station and when the government knew they were losing the battle, they gave me the licence.

The government amended the *Newspaper Registration Act*, as mentioned earlier, in 2002, following the commencement of the *Kiribati Newstar*. All complaints relating to the newspaper were to be dealt with by a Newspaper Complaints Commission. The situation changed again in 2004 when the government amended the Act. All complaints associated with the newspapers in relation to section 16 of the Act now have to be dealt with in court.

The current *Radio-Communication Regulation 1998*, Part III, section 28(1) states that any person, organisation or group that believes a broadcast is false or distorted may write to the media organisation and 'require that [the] licensee ... broadcast a statement containing facts considered by that person, organisation or group to be true'.

The Telecommunication Bill 2004 will replace the *Radio-Communication Regulation* when gazetted. Part III, section 28(1), in this Bill contains a similar requirement:

Where the Authority is satisfied that a licensee has breached the conditions of a licence or an obligation under this Act, the Authority may direct the licensee in writing to remedy the breach or to do such acts as the Authority may specify in the direction.

However, there is no information provided on what constitutes a breach.

1.4 Defamation

In Kiribati defamation is 'the publication of a false and derogatory statement respecting another person without lawful justification and that exposes him to hatred, ridicule or contempt, or which causes him to be shunned or avoided, or which has a tendency to injure him in his office, profession or trade'. The Penal Code (Cap 67), section 185, provides that defamatory matters are 'matters likely to injure the reputation of any person by exposing him to hatred, contempt or ridicule, or likely to damage any person in his profession or trade by an injury to his reputation'. (Assistant Secretary, MCTTD)

Libel is defined in section 184 of the Penal Code:

Any person who, by print, writing, painting, effigy or by any means otherwise than solely by gestures, spoken words or other sounds, unlawfully publishes any defamatory matter concerning another person, with intent to defame that other person, is guilty of the misdemeanour termed 'libel'.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

The main duty of public service radio as stated under section 3(2) of the *Broadcasting and Publication Authority Ordinance 1979* is to provide local sound broadcasting services for disseminating information, education and entertainment.

Additional requirements under section 5(1) are:

- (i) *Not to include programs which offend against good taste or decency or is likely to encourage or incite to crime to lead to disorder or to be offensive to public feeling;*

- (ii) *That the substantial proportions of the recorded and other matter in the program are of Kiribati origins and performed by an I-Kiribati;*
- (iii) *That due impartiality and opportunity are preserved on the part of the persons providing the programs as respect matters of political or industrial controversy or relating to current public policy.*

There is no specific provision in the *Broadcasting and Publication Authority Ordinance* for free broadcasting for community groups. However, the *Telecommunication Bill 2004*, section 74(2c), authorises the Minister to make any regulations in regards to the conditions for granting of radio communication licences. The Minister might, for example, include free broadcasting for community groups if he thinks this is necessary or if it is in the public interest.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The *Broadcasting and Publication Authority Ordinance* established government-owned radio broadcasting. In 1998 this legislation was amended to create a corporation known as the Broadcasting and Publications Authority (BPA). The legislation covers the operation of Radio Kiribati, the national public service broadcaster and the government newspaper, *Te Uekera*.

The BPA is a government-owned corporation and the BPA Board oversees the operation of Radio Kiribati (not *Te Uekera*). The Board is selected by government and consists of five members. Three of the current members are former MPs, and one is a retired Permanent Secretary. The fifth member is a former BPA manager and now a partner in the private station, Newair FM89. The government appoints the Chair of the Board.

The Board appoints the general manager and applications can be called from the public or the Board can use its power to appoint somebody it sees fit to hold the position. The BPA's General Manager is responsible to the Board of Directors, while *Te Uekera*'s Editor reports to the BPA Publication Manager and the BPA General Manager.

The BPA is responsible for its own affairs from finance to staff appointments.

Under previous governments the BPA was regarded as an arm of government, but the situation appears to have changed. According to the Proprietor of Newair and *Newstar*, who is also a government Member of Parliament:

I had a chance of speaking to the BPA staff recently and the feedback from them was positive. They used to fear about what they're going to say and write but now they have overcome that, in compliance to the rules and laws of the land of course. I see a new sense of freedom from our journalists which I believe has to do with how the government is operating.

1.7 Government funding for media

The BPA does not receive a government subsidy. It is funded through sponsorship of programs and news from private businesses, NGOs and government departments.

Te Uekera derives its revenue mainly through advertising and does not receive a government subsidy.

There is no direct government funding for the BPA after subsidy was stopped in 1986. It operates as a fully commercial entity and runs profitably through its 'katanoata' (advertisement and paid private business). This includes government advertising and payments by individual government departments for broadcast time.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

Radio

- The BPA operates Radio Kiribati, the national public service radio station. It is a government-owned corporation.
- Newair FM89 and *Kiribati Newstar* are private media owned by Ieremia Tabai, a government MP, and three other shareholders. Newair is the only private commercial station in Kiribati. However, the Proprietor of Newair and *Newstar* said:

It's a very marginal operation. I'm in the process of thinking there is no future for it because the market here is very small. But we are just managing somehow and I'm not optimistic about the future of it.

Newspapers

- *Te Uekera*, the government newspaper, literally translated as the Tree of Life/Knowledge, used to print 2000 copies weekly. However, since January 2005 the paper has been published twice a week (every Tuesday and Friday). It includes both the Kiribati and English languages.
- *Kiribati Newstar* is a private weekly paper printing 2000 copies each week. It is bilingual (Kiribati and English) but mostly in Kiribati. The *Kiribati Newstar* has a website but it has not been updated for five years.
- *Te Mauri* is a weekly newspaper produced by the Kiribati Protestant Church in the Kiribati language. It is a 16-page publication, with 2500 copies printed every week.

Television

A television service commenced in 2004 and it is operated by Telecom Services Kiribati Limited (TKL), a government-owned statutory corporation. Currently it televises ABC Asia Pacific, CNN and some local programming. A Television Coordinator has been appointed (former General Manager BPA), and other staff, including journalists, will be hired. The initial work on the television station began in 2003, when TV New Zealand was hired to carry out a feasibility study. An Australian company, Powercom, undertook the technical work.⁴ There are plans for television to be separated from TKL, and for Television Kiribati to operate as a stand-alone company, owned by government.

2.2 Radio and television program formats

Radio Kiribati has news on the hour, a weekly current affairs program, government department and NGO programs, sports, a women's program, drama and comedies, as well as music all day. The programs are in Kiribati and English.

Newair broadcasts a mix of the hits of today and yesterday, including all the new music from around the Pacific and news from both BBC World Service and Radio Australia. The programs are presented in English and Kiribati.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

Te Uekera focuses mainly on local, Pacific and international news, as well as issues affecting the general population.

Newstar's Manager and Co-publisher said the paper did not have a specific focus, it is 'just a weekly newspaper covering stories within Kiribati ... not much happens in Kiribati so we just print whatever comes around'. The aim of publishing the paper is to give the people of Kiribati an independent source of news and information that is not subject to the control of those in government, and to encourage media freedom in the country. The first edition was published during Media Freedom Week, on 5 May 2000.

Te Mauri's focus is on general information. It also carries Pacific and world news, insight pieces and current affairs, jokes, cartoons and crosswords. Kiribati Protestant Church workers based in the outer islands also send in news.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

Radio Kiribati targets the general public, from small children to the elderly. It reaches the whole of Kiribati, including Christmas Island. It only transmits on the AM band (no FM). In 2002 the station conducted workshops for island community workers on how to gather news and send in the materials from the outer islands for broadcast.

Newair's Station Manager said it has no specific target audience, but mostly the young listeners (teenagers) tune in to the station. The Station Manager said more than half the population is under 20 years of age. In other Pacific Island countries surveyed FM music stations have also had a major appeal for youth audiences. Newair only covers the South Tarawa area and does not reach North Tarawa or the outer islands.

Newstar does not have a specific target audience, although the sports section targets youth (aged 15 to 25). Eighty per cent of the copies are circulated in Tarawa and the rest to the other islands in

the Gilbert Islands group and to overseas subscribers in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and America, as well as Kiribati seaman working on overseas ships.

Te Uekera targets the people of Kiribati and is distributed in the capital, Tarawa, and to all 15 outer islands through outer island agents.

Te Mauri targets the whole community. It is distributed throughout the country and abroad (to Kiribati citizens living overseas).

2.5 Audience research

The BPA does not conduct audience research for Radio Kiribati or *Te Uekera*. The Radio Kiribati Station Manager said it used to do this in the mid-1990s with questionnaires slotted in *Te Uekera* but 'not much was returned'.

The Kiribati Protestant Church has not conducted audience research. Lack of finances and resources was given as the reasons for this. Newair has been operating for two years and has done no research.

2.6 NGO and government access

The BPA charges AU\$4.00 per minute for airtime on Radio Kiribati and AU\$2.00 per minute as a recording production charge, a total of AU\$6.00 per minute.⁵

Newair charges AU\$100 for a one-hour program; AU\$50 for 30 minutes and AU\$25 for 15 minutes. Newair does provide some free community service timeslots for religious groups, but the Station Manager said they are not using this service.⁶

Newstar publishes articles for free and charges only for advertisements.

Te Uekera charges AU\$100 for a full page, AU\$50 for a half-page and AU\$25 for a quarter page, whether for an advertisement or a feature. It does have reduced rates for long-term agreements.

The paper prints articles from government and NGOs for free when there is enough space. However, if the newspaper has no space and the government department or NGO wants its article in that edition, they pay to have this published in the advertising section.

Te Mauri charges AU\$100 for a full-page advertisement, AU\$50 for a half page, AU\$25 for quarter page. Any news article is published for free.

2.7 Journalism resources

Radio Kiribati has five journalists who have an average of four years experience. Recruits require a minimum of a pass in Form 5 (Year 11). A pass in Form 6 (Year 12) and a degree is an advantage. The BPA pays AU\$208 to AU\$236 per week (cadets and journalists); senior journalists are paid AU\$243–292, sub-editors AU\$301–364, editors AU\$373–436, and news managers AU\$447–480. Journalists can stay at the BPA until retirement at 50 years.

Newair's Station Manager also works as an editor, and there are two journalists, one of whom is a cadet. Newair requires cadets to have completed Form 6 with excellent passes in English, and ideally three years media experience. Cadets receive AU\$50 a week; mid-career journalists AU\$70 a week and the Station Manager AU\$110 a week. The Proprietor of Newair and *Newstar* said:

Private media organisations like myself do not have the financial capacity to employ somebody with a journalism degree say from USP. The only place they can work in is the BPA or any government ministry because they will be paid according to the salary scales of government civil servants.

Newair's journalists leave for financial reasons.

Newstar has on average two journalists and a Co-publisher. The two journalists had no experience when they commenced with the paper three years ago. The Co-publisher was a former editor of *Te Uekera* and has 20 years experience. *Newstar's* two journalists are paid AU\$100 a week.

Te Uekera has five working journalists, and the minimum level of education required for journalism recruits is Form 6. Salary rates for the BPA are listed above. *Te Uekera's* Acting Editor said, 'Normally a working journalist would leave the media organisation to take up another job which is more lucrative and highly paid.'

Te Mauri's Communications Manager doubles as a journalist and an assistant does most of the secretarial work. The Communications Manager has 27 years experience and was previously a Manager of the BPA. He has a certificate in journalism and has attended many workshops and

conferences. The Communications Manager is paid around AU\$200 a fortnight, less than half of what he was getting at BPA.

Equipment resources

Radio Kiribati has hand-held tape recorders and computers (with internet access) and telephones. Only the print editors have laptop computers and there are no mobile phones. The recording studio has both analogue and digital equipment. The Station Manager said the journalists need more recorders and computers 'so they can have their own to work with and meet deadlines'.

Newair has telephones, a computer but no access to internet. The station has a digital Marantz recorder. The Station Manager said, 'We cannot cover events that are happening simultaneously with only one recorder, and the only headphones we have in the studio only has one side working.'

Newstar has a digital camera, a computer (with internet access) and one telephone. The Manager and Co-publisher described the equipment as inadequate:

We need digital recorders and new computer software for photo imaging and layout. Our printing press has broken down (very old) and so we have purchased a photocopying machine to run the 2000 copies off every week. If the photocopier breaks down, we have to fly in a technician from Fiji because there are no technicians available in Kiribati.

Te Uekera has four computers, an off-set printer in A3 format and 24-hour internet access.

The Kiribati Protestant Church has two computers (one with internet access), a still camera and a digital camera, and an offset printing machine.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

Radio Kiribati broadcasts five news bulletins a day in English and Kiribati and has one current affairs program a week.

Newair broadcasts six news bulletins a day (three in Kiribati, and three in English). It does a round-up of topical stories each week, and this airs on Sunday.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

Radio Kiribati produces an average of five local stories a day. Bulletins may or may not be updated, depending on the amount of news.

Newair has an average of four to five local stories a day.

Newstar publishes 15 local stories per week (70 per cent of the paper).

Te Mauri publishes 10 local stories per edition, and this is about 80 per cent of the paper.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

Radio Kiribati's Manager said there were no priority governance issues. The station covers 'whatever comes along our path'.

The Station Manager of Newair said that at present 'the essence of good governance is embodied in a media body such as FM89' but governance issues are yet to be explored because 'none of the journalists in Kiribati have the capability to do such reporting in the faith of good governance'. The Station Manager added:

For Kiribati which is still a least developed country, news is always slow so all of the news articles in the papers and radio stations are often dubbed as in the public interest, whether it's political, environmental, sport or traditional.

Te Uekera's Editor listed issues affecting the general population such as health, environment and gender.

Newstar also does not have any specific governance priorities. Reports are based on an issue's importance. 'We just publish the stories as we get them like when Parliament is in session or when the national budget is approved.' (Manager/Co-publisher)

Te Mauri listed human rights, health, road safety, the environment and, when Parliament is in session, all the parliamentary proceedings that include new legislation that is enacted. The Communications Manager said, 'We look at the top happenings of the week, the top functions of the week and other stories that will interest the public.'

None of the media reported receiving donor funding to produce good governance content.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

Radio Kiribati uses government press releases, interviews with government ministers and the internet for overseas stories. Regional and overseas sources are PACNEWS, BBC and Radio Australia.

Newair's journalists use interviews with sources and press releases. They also record the BBC news and download news from the internet and transcribe it into Kiribati. Other news sources are Radio Australia and PACNEWS.

Te Uekera's main news-gathering techniques are interviews with sources, press conferences, press releases, the internet, Radio Australia, RNZI and the BBC for international news and sports.

Newstar listed interviews with sources, press releases, the internet, BBC, Radio Australia, the Fiji Times website, and PACNEWS.

Te Mauri news is gathered from interviews, press releases from government departments and overseas stories from the internet, the BBC, USA Today online, Radio Australia and PACNEWS.

2.12 Media access to government content

Radio Kiribati and *Te Uekera* said they were in contact with every government department. *Te Uekera's* Acting Editor commented, 'We have access to press releases, handed in to our newsroom in hard copy, not electronically [but] policies are hard to get unless a journalist requests it.'

Newair's Station Manager did not report any difficulty accessing government information. 'We can always get our copies from concerned departments or from the President's Press Liaison Officer.' However, government material is not available via a website and needs to be obtained from the department concerned. Newair described its working relationship with government as 'very slow'.

The Communications Manager for *Te Mauri* said he has easy access to government information because he knows them very well. 'But only a very few would make it difficult.' He said he had a contact in every government department and also in the private sector. 'We just communicate by email, which makes things a whole lot easier.'

2.13 Constraints on local news production

Since the merger of Radio Kiribati and *Te Uekera* at the BPA in 2004, there are more local news stories because the journalists are working on both radio and print. As a result of the focus on increasing daily news output, there is less time for current affairs production on Radio Kiribati. The standard of the recording equipment is also impacting on the quality of current affairs production.⁷

Newair's local news production is constrained by lack of staff and transport, slow government press releases, and the lack of telephone and internet connectivity to the outer islands.

Te Uekera's local news production depends on the number of available staff, space availability and advertising.

The number of local news stories produced by *Newstar* is dependent on the availability of staff (only two for most of the year).

The *Te Mauri* cited advertising space as the main constraint.

2.14 Threats to funding

None of the media reported losing government funding due to editorial content. However, *Newstar* has had corporate advertising withdrawn by a private company that owns the cinema in Tarawa.

'The company complained that the printing quality of the movie schedule we printed was poor and decided to pull out. This happened early this year.' (Manager/Co-Publisher)

2.15 Industry training

Radio Kiribati provides no training for its cadets, and *Te Uekera* has informal on-the-job training on basic reporting skills.

Newstar provides 'practical, learning on the job'. According to the Proprietor of Newair FM89/*Newstar*:

There are hardly any trained media personnel within the government departments and the media organisations. The staffs that work for me were just picked out of the streets because they knocked on the door asking for a job. If they can write and ask a few questions, well that's all we need. We cannot discriminate and be choosy about those we employ because

we just haven't reached the stage yet where we have a pool of skilled/qualified journalists to choose from. The media are not effective even though they are trying to do it. They need trained personnel. I've been encouraging our people to report on the finances of government and the findings of the Auditor's Report. But no one here has been able to do this because they are simply not trained. There are no short options for building capacity in this sector. I think it's going to be a process of development that is going to take a while. When the people are more educated and hopefully will be able to perform their role better in the media industry ... Private media organisations like myself do not have the financial capacity to employ somebody with a journalism degree say from USP. The only place they can work in is the BPA or any government ministry because they will be paid according to the salary scales of government civil servants.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

Radio Kiribati's mandate is that the news must be balanced, to cover true stories and not just rumours. No reference was made to a code of ethics.

Newair's Station Manager said the station does not have 'a code of ethics in black and white, however, that does not mean our staff are free to do their own will'.

Newstar does not have a code of ethics.

Te Uekera's Acting Editor said there is no code of ethics 'however there are plans to have these in place, provided professional advice and institutionalisation is provided from neighbouring countries'.

Te Mauri made no reference to a code of ethics.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

The Kiribati Islands Media Association (KIMA) was established in March 2004 to coincide with Media Freedom Week. KIMA has a chairman/president, vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer. The members are drawn from all media organisations in Kiribati, the BPA, *Te Mauri*, Newair and *Newstar*, as well as government employees producing radio programs and public relations work. There are about 50 members and there are no subscription fees. The first draft of the KIMA constitution has been completed.

After the constitution is finalised, KIMA will work on the code of ethics and training needs. The President of KIMA said:

We need to have all the journalists to be aware of some sort of code of ethics because most of them are working without any knowledge or awareness of this at the moment. In terms of other areas of capacity building, we need to align ourselves with organisations like PINA for our own growth and benefit.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

- The Kiribati media industry is small, and has been dominated by government media until recently. Economic conditions make it unlikely that many more private media will be established. Both the government-owned radio station and the government newspaper rely on advertising and the purchase of space for their operations, as such they compete with the private media. This is especially the case with Radio Kiribati as it can reach the outer islands.
- There is a small pool of experienced journalists, but few have tertiary journalism qualifications. Training is one area that would benefit from further development through the national media association, KIMA. This could include opportunities to gain a tertiary qualification, accredited training for all cadets, and short-term specialist training for mid- to senior-level journalists interested in providing more in-depth, investigative reports. There is not a tradition of investigative or analytical reporting, and this would need to be developed.
- The lack of a code of ethics for the industry is another area that needs urgent attention. KIMA needs to be supported in its efforts to develop and implement this. This should be accompanied by the establishment of a complaints committee and/or tribunal that can hear complaints against the media.
- The feasibility of introducing community media in outer islands is also worth exploring as a way of increasing the diversity of media available, and providing media access for outer island communities. They are not well served by the current Tarawa-focused media.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

The Office of the President has its own Press Liaison Unit. There are 12 government ministries and seven produce media content on a regular basis. They are: the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport Development (MEYSD), Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives (MCIC), Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development (MELAD), Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS), Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (MISA), Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development (MFMRD), Ministry of Natural Resources Development (MNRD), and Ministry of Public Works and Utilities (MPWU).

Human resources

The President's Press Liaison Unit has two officers, a Press Liaison Officer and Assistant Liaison Officer. No other Ministry has these positions.

In ministries where there are officers undertaking media work, they are generally not media trained and are junior staff. These officers work with producers at Radio Kiribati to produce the programs. The press releases are written or dictated to the (junior) media officer by the ministry's Permanent Secretary (PS). The PS also checks the final radio script before the programs go to air.

The Health Education and Promotion Unit has a Chief Health Education Officer, a Senior Assistant and two other officers. One concentrates on research and development, the other focuses on developing information, education and communication (IEC) materials through videos, radio programs, posters and audiovisual aids. In addition to this, the unit has a radio producer, a graphic artist, a computer operator and an offset printer operator. The Unit has an annual budget of AU\$114,000 and produces printed materials whenever funds are made available from international donors like the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the SPC. This is the best resourced government media producer.

At the National Nutrition Centre (Ministry of Health), one officer, the Nutritionist, is involved with media production as part of other duties. This involves doing research, writing up scripts and recording the materials at the BPA.

MELAD has two officers who produce media content as part of their other duties as agricultural officers. This includes producing the radio program using materials received from all the departments within the ministry and producing print media content.

MISA has two officers who work on media production along with their other duties.

The Inspector at the Police Traffic Department works on media production as part of his duties.

MEYSD has a Schools Broadcast Unit, but this was not included in the survey as it was not operational during the survey period.⁸

3.2 Government media processes

According to the directive of the Secretary to Cabinet, all ministries can send their press releases to the media provided they send copies to the Office of the President's Press Unit so that each release can be included in the Government newsletter *Rongorongo Man Ami Tautaeaka (RMAT)*.⁹ *RMAT* is published every week as an insert page in the private newspaper *Newstar*. The last administration used to have a radio program on Radio Kiribati. However, the present government is using the print media. The media can arrange for a press conference with the President on issues of interest to their organisation, and the Office of the President arranges press conferences especially on United Nations and Pacific Islands Forum meetings and so on. Cabinet decisions and policies are sent to the media in press releases also. All press releases from the President's office and ministries are written in both English and Kiribati languages.

Hansard is available at the Parliament for any interested journalists and Parliament is broadcast on Radio Kiribati. The cost of broadcasting Parliament is approximately AU\$30,000 per session. Parliament sits for 10 days (Monday to Friday over two weeks), and there are three Parliamentary sessions in a year.

The President's Press Liaison Officer said the media has a good working partnership with the unit:

Information that the media wants relating to government policies/issues is readily available to the media. Sometimes the media by-passes us and go straight to the government ministries. When this occurs, the Permanent Secretaries reply to the media 'on the spot'.

The Proprietor of *Newair/Newstar*, who is also a government MP, commented:

The government and the people working there are finding this as a new environment to them. In past years, they've never seen a need to explain their actions in such a way but now things are happening and I'm encouraging my people to make a point of raising issues of importance to the public and now the government is beginning to see the importance of being well briefed and prepared in terms of allowing information to flow out. I understand also the Minister of Communication is very keen on the idea of encouraging the media to do its job but we have not reached the stage of ensuring that information is flowing because it's very hard to get information out of the government unless you ring them up all the time. In my informal discussions with the ministers when I meet them I point out that it would be a good idea as a matter of routine that their activities and policies are relayed to the public in a form of press release. But we are still at the starting point and over the years we will improve because the government knows it cannot portray a good image unless it communicates its policies and activities to the general public.

3.3 Government department media content

As noted earlier, the President's Press Liaison Officer produces the government newsletter, *RMAT*, along with press releases.

MHMS produces a 15-minute radio program every week on Radio Kiribati and it writes a weekly column in *Te Mauri*. The National Nutrition Centre produces a 20-minute weekly radio program on Radio Kiribati focusing mainly on nutrition issues, diabetes and breastfeeding. It also produces occasional radio spots for events like National Diabetes Week. The programs are produced in Kiribati.

MELAD produces a 15-minute radio program every fortnight on Radio Kiribati. It has a column every week in *Te Mauri*, and provides *Newstar* with monthly articles on environmental issues like biodiversity. It also publishes a quarterly newsletter and a monthly print publication in pamphlet form. The radio programs are in Kiribati and print materials are in both Kiribati and English.

MISA collects news and compiles records for the 23 Island Councils (20 rural and three urban) in Kiribati, and materials from the five divisions of the Ministry. The divisions are: Social Welfare, Civil Registration, Local Government, Rural Planning Unit, and Culture. It produces a 20-minute radio program on Radio Kiribati using this information and provides material on an irregular basis to *Te Mauri*.

The Kiribati Police Traffic Department produces a weekly 15-minute radio program on road safety. The scripts are also sent to the President's office for insertion in the government newsletter, *RMAT*.

MEYSD produces a daily schools program on Radio Kiribati from Monday to Thursday between 9.30 and 11.30 am. There are three terms in the school calendar and the broadcast runs over 10 weeks per term (total of 30 weeks in a year). The BPA charges the Ministry AU\$99 per hour, which comes to AU\$23,760 a year.

MCIC, MFMRD and the MPWU each produce a 15-minute radio program every fortnight on Radio Kiribati.

Information in the following sections is based on interviews with the ministries included in the survey: Agriculture, Health, Internal and Social Affairs, the Police Traffic Department and the President's Press Liaison Unit.

3.4 Media governance priorities

The President's Press Liaison Officer said the current governance issues are health, HIV/AIDS, the environment and rising sea-levels. 'There is not much coverage of human rights because there is no abuse of it and national security is not a concern at all.'

The Health Education and Promotion Unit's role is to support public health services in a bid to reduce the mortality rate in Kiribati. Other priorities are population control (family planning) and reproductive health (HIV/AIDS):

We try to balance our population growth with the economic growth of the country so that we improve on our gross-per-capita. We also promote programs on primary health care to the community and environmental health through materials we produce. (Chief Health Education Officer)

The National Nutrition Centre's priority governance issues relate to good nutrition for all age groups.

MELAD focuses on educating the farmers about various farming techniques they can use, and new technologies. Priority governance issues are the risks involved in bringing agricultural plants and soil into Kiribati from abroad, disseminating research findings and the importance of maintaining livestock (pigs and chickens).

MISA's Information Unit Officer said:

We play an important role because we keep records of things that occur within the community especially out in the outer islands where there is no electricity and so we go out and capture the activities and keep a record of it.

The main focus of the police radio program is road safety. There were 12 deaths in 2004. The Department informs the public on how to use the roads safely and reminds them about the laws that are in place and the penalties for those who break the laws. 'It's an important role because we educate the public on these issues.' (Inspector)

3.5 Target audiences

The President's Press Liaison Unit uses print media for the more literate readers on the capital South Tarawa, and is planning to relaunch its radio program for all people around the country. The Unit is also working on a website targeting people overseas with information on government activities and news releases.

Information from Health Education targets the general public and the National Nutrition Centre targets mostly mothers and the general population.

MELAD is primarily interested in the farmers in the outer islands, but also the general public. The Ministry receives feedback and enquiries by telephone on subjects discussed in the radio program, with people wanting to know more about what was discussed on the radio.

MISA aims its media content at the community of Kiribati 'because we are the local governing authority'.

The Police Traffic Department targets vehicle owners and drivers.

None of the ministries have mechanisms to formally evaluate the effectiveness of their media content.

3.6 Qualifications and training

Most of the information officers from different government departments, especially those departments that have radio programs on Radio Kiribati, have participated in basic media training workshops designed to enhance their capabilities to produce better programs on the radio. The last one was hosted by BPA in 2002 under the sponsorship of AusAID.

The President's Press Liaison Unit recruits officers who have working experience with a media organisation. However, preference is given to officers who have a media qualification. The two Press Liaison Officers are the only tertiary-educated journalists in government media positions:

The rest of officers dealing with general media work in different Ministries normally get their training from media people at the media outlets they use. For Radio Program, officers from Government would go to BPA and there they will get advice and basic training on how to do their interviews, recording, using music instruments for programs theme. (Press Liaison Officer)

For Health Education and Promotion, officers require at least a certificate in health education or specialised training in health. Currently, media skills are an advantage but not a requirement:

While these officers have special skills in health education and promotion, there is still a need to have specific training in relevant media skills, such as interviews, and presentation. These are necessary in order to uplift the face of the health radio program to the target audience and could eventually lead to a behavioural change that is the only ingredient to prevent everyone from drastic health problems. And at the same time encourage people to make right decisions through this kind of program. (Chief Health Education Officer)

The Health Education Unit Officer has completed training in digital video production with SPC in Suva.

The Nutritionist at the National Nutrition Centre has a diploma in nutrition, but no media training. She said that training was needed in media awareness and social marketing via the media.

One of the Information Officers at MELAD has a certificate in agriculture and the other officer has a Bachelor of Arts (agriculture) from USP. Training requirements listed were for radio production, how to collect and process information for the media, and journalism (writing) skills. 'We also need training in librarianship. We have a library here where all our resource materials are kept but no qualified librarian to manage it or teach our staff how to use it effectively.' (Information Officer)

MISA does not require media qualifications because, according to the Information Unit Officer, 'It's not really a media position but more of an administrative one.' However, the Information Unit Officer commented, more resources and training are needed. 'If the position for this job is a media one then the person should be sent for training'.

The Kiribati Parliament normally runs a week-long seminar for parliamentarians annually before the first session of Parliament. This covers the different government department roles, explanations on government overseas investment, legislation, parliamentary procedures, the media and so on. Permanent Secretaries and consultants (both locals and expatriates working in Kiribati) conduct the training workshops. However, there has been no media awareness training for the President or government ministers to assist them to work with the media.

3.7 Equipment

The Press Liaison Unit in the President's office has internet access, a computer, printer, cameras and tape recorder. The unit uses the BPA studios for radio production and does not have a high-quality printer for its newsletter.

Some of these media-producing ministries have limited internet access, telephones, recording equipment (portable recorders), computers and other basic equipment. They lack proper studios and normally use BPA's facilities:

I thought the equipment they got is enough for their work ... if they had their own mini-working studio for recording their programs, it would be better since BPA is now embarking on trying to produce more of its own programs, so its studios will begin to be very busy as the years come. (Press Liaison Officer)

The Health Education and Promotion Unit is equipped with computers, printing machines, hand-held tape recorders, telephones and internet access, and a small studio and printing area. The Chief Health Education Officer said:

We used to produce the video materials ourselves [in-house] but since the Government was not able to meet the maintenance costs or replace the old video equipment, we are no longer capable of doing this. This happened five years ago and we are currently seeking funds for a new digital video editing production studio.

The National Nutrition Centre has a computer (without internet access) and a telephone. There are only two computers with internet access and they belong to the Permanent Secretary and the Director (office is almost 5 km away). The Nutritionist said the equipment is inadequate: 'I have to travel miles to get internet access and even do my recordings at BPA.'

MELAD has one computer (without internet access), a tape recorder and telephone. The Information Officer described the equipment as inadequate. 'We have a very old computer with outdated software that frequently breaks down. We don't even have a digital camera or video camera.'

MISA has one computer (without internet access) and telephones. Only the Permanent Secretary's computer has internet access. The Information Officer said the equipment was 'not very adequate'.

The Police Traffic Department has one computer (without internet access) and telephone. There is no internet access anywhere within the Department. The Inspector said the Department needed internet access and more transport and staff.

3.8 Government-media relationships

Not all the ministries feel as positive as the President's Press Liaison Unit, as noted in Section 3.2, Government Media Processes, about their relationships with the media.

The Health Ministry's Chief Health Education Officer said that there was no working partnership arrangement in place between the Department and the media:

I personally recommend the setting up of a special radio service for the various government departments including Health so that we can inform/educate the people better. The 15-minute weekly radio slot is not enough and the airtime costs charged by the BPA are too high in Kiribati.

MELAD also felt that there is no working partnership in place:

Whatever we give them we have to pay. It would be good if a regular column in the newspaper was allocated for us where we can publish all the important information about agriculture in for free. We would like even to increase our radio program to 45 minutes or one hour but the problem is again the cost ... The government departments that are producing media should meet to discuss the issues each one is facing with the media (whether it be the costs or other issues) and then we approach the media and give them our contribution in improving the awareness and flow of information to the people. If the media is willing to give us more print space/airtime we can put out more stuff on a more regular basis. (Information Officer)

However, the National Nutrition Centre's Nutritionist said the Centre has had a good relationship with the media since it started its radio program 10 years ago:

They understand our needs except for the costs they charge because we have been asking them to lower the charges ... because we are not benefiting in any way financially from the materials we put on air. It's really for the benefit of the community.

The Police Traffic Department's Inspector also said, 'Yes we have a good relationship. I talk with them every day either in my officer or at theirs about the news and issues concerning road safety.'

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

- A number of government departments are involved in media production, but usually junior officers are employed to work in this area alongside their other duties. This could be further developed by increasing the media production capacity of the officers involved, along with more senior officers, so that they do not have to rely on 'talking head' programs; and diversify the media forms used by the government departments so that they effectively target different audiences. The pool of capable officers in each department also needs to be increased so that when one leaves the production does not stop.
- There is also an urgent need to improve government connectivity to the internet, as government information processes are currently slow and outdated.
- Media awareness training for the President and senior ministers on at least an annual basis organised in consultation with KIMA would assist government-media working relationships and help senior government members to develop a better understanding of their responsibilities to inform the public via the media.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

The Kiribati Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (KANGO) has 37 members. The survey included interviews with KANGO and five other NGOs involved in media production. They are the Kiribati Protestant Church, the Kiribati Catholic Church, the Foundation for the Peoples for the South Pacific, Kiribati (FSP, also referred to as FSPK), Aia Maea Ainen Kiribati (AMAK, or the National Council of Women), and the Nei Tabera Ni Kai (NTNK) Incorporated.

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

The Kiribati Protestant Church produces a community radio program broadcast on Radio Kiribati. This is self-funded from money received from Church members and revenue from *Te Mauri* sales. The radio content includes a daily five-minute devotional radio program (Monday to Saturday), a 10-minute Bible study radio program every Sunday, and a 45-minute prerecorded church service every week. The focus is primarily on the spiritual wellbeing of the community.

The Kiribati Catholic Church produces a radio program on Radio Kiribati focusing mainly on news and happenings within the Church in Kiribati and prerecorded church services. The content includes a daily five-minute morning devotion that runs for three weeks before the other denominations have their turn. The Bible Reflection and Church News program is broadcast every two weeks, together with a prerecorded 45-minute church service. The Church also produces videos from ordination ceremonies, birthday parties, weddings and so on. The videos can be hired or sold. The focus of the content is the 'spiritual wellbeing of the people that the government does not address,' according to the Information Manager. The language used is Kiribati.

The FSP Good Governance: Voices and Choices project was initiated by the FSP International office in Suva and covers Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Kiribati. The project's objectives are to address community governance issues (such as water and sanitation, marine resources and land issues) and promote peace in the four countries. It began in 2000 and is now in its fourth phase, implementing community awareness and educating the public about the findings. As part of the project, the Project Officer produces a fortnightly radio program and a monthly newsletter that began in December 2004. The program runs for 15 to 20 minutes focusing mainly on educating the public about the findings of the project. The recordings are done at FM89 because it is cheaper and then broadcast on Radio Kiribati because of its reach to outer islands.

The first edition of the newsletter (two pages, 20 copies) was distributed to the government ministries the project is working with, such as Education, Internal and Social Affairs and the President's office, as well as to other NGOs and the outer island councils. The radio program is in Kiribati and the newsletter is in both Kiribati and English.

The FSP Over the Waves project is funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), UK. Beginning in August 2003, it is a four-year project that seeks to address the needs, issues and concerns of communities living in the outer islands of Kiribati. The Project Officer produces a half-hour weekly radio program on Radio Kiribati focusing mainly on health, environmental concerns and development issues:

Our priorities are the same as the government but we go further by visiting the outer island communities and doing practical things to address the people's needs and concern. The BPA has about 40 staff but they don't bother to go out to the outer islands and report on the happenings at the grassroots level.

KANGO produces a quarterly newsletter with information about KANGO's development and activities. It also contains news on member organisations, information on how member organisations can improve their relationship with the government and information on the nature of NGOs and related issues. The newsletter is four pages (A4 size) and is published in English and Kiribati. According to the Coordinator, KANGO's priority is to strengthen capacity building in the NGOs in Kiribati, including assisting with writing their constitutions, writing policies and procedures, and registration with the government. 'We also help them carry out their needs assessment and strategic planning and proposals.' KANGO has also published a Strategic Plan 2004-06 to strengthen NGOs in Kiribati. One of stated goals in the plan is to 'to provide relevant and timely information on issues and concerns affecting NGOs, CBOs (community-based organisations) and civil society at large in Kiribati'.

AMAK does not produce any media content due to lack of funds. The Legal Rights Training Officer has done radio interviews with Radio Kiribati and Newair on issues like domestic violence (although this does not occur often). AMAK's aim is to promote good governance and human rights because:

The public need to be made aware of the laws that relate to them. For example, the women need to know of the laws that relate to sexual abuse and rape and they need to know where to go when they need help like to the police and the court clerk to register their case. (Legal Rights Training Officer)

AMAK comes under the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, so it is partly an NGO and partly government, and this has caused some difficulties:

Press releases are sent to the media but the major obstacles are instructions from the government about censorship of information. All press releases go through the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs for approval before they are despatched to the media. (Legal Rights Training Officer)

The NTNK Video Unit provides community development information to communities in the 22 inhabited islands. It has also provided local content for the TKL television service. On

average the unit produces six to seven major video projects per year that have a particular information or governance focus. Themes include economic issues, such as starting and improving a small business, income generation through craftwork, outer island development and seaweed farming; women's issues, such as family violence, youth issues, courtship, arranged marriages and alcohol abuse; sport; children's rights; consumer rights across all sectors; environmental issues such as solid waste, water and fish stock conservation, marine protected areas and global warming; urban migration; law and order; health; and election debates.¹⁰ People watch the video programs or DVDs on their own equipment at home and/or at community gatherings, such as church and island council meetings or workshops.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

The Kiribati Protestant Church programs target the whole of Kiribati, including the outer islands.

The Catholic Church targets the whole community and it receives audience feedback through letters and telephone calls from Tarawa and the outer islands.

FSP's Good Governance Project targets people at the community and government level.

FSP's Over the Waves program targets people in the outer islands.

KANGO's newsletter targets its 37 NGO members, aid donors, government departments and other stakeholders. It receives informal feedback on the newsletter through telephone calls and emails.

The target audiences for AMAK's radio interviews are women and the public in general. It receives feedback through telephone calls. 'Callers would voice their opinions and concerns if what was said is against customs/traditions.' (Legal Rights Training Officer)

The NTNK Video Unit targets all I-Kiribati, including communities on outer islands.

None of the NGOs has a formal process for evaluating the effectiveness of their media content, and all rely on similar informal communication. However, a survey on human development conducted on four islands in 2003 for UNICEF included the question: Have you seen videos or DVDs by NTNK? Of the respondents, 96 per cent in the outer islands and 98 per cent in South Tarawa had seen the videos or DVDs. Most of the respondents on the outer islands had viewed these in a community setting, while those in Tarawa had mainly viewed them at home.

Respondents then selected their top 10 videos: drama and stories led the way, along with information, comedies, culture and music. The Director of NTNK reported that, asked why they enjoyed the chosen titles, the most common answers were:

- *It's about us and our way of life.*
- *They touch our hearts — are sometimes sad, sometimes funny.*
- *We learn many things — especially about youth, health, social issues.*
- *It's in our own language — the videos understand us — we understand them.*

4.4 NGO media capacity

As mentioned earlier, in Section 2, Media Industry, the Kiribati Protestant Church Communications Manager is also a journalist.

The Catholic Church has five staff working at the St Paul's Communication Centre. Two staff record the radio program on CD in its studio and deliver it to Radio Kiribati; two produce video content and a fifth staff member is multi-skilled and assists everyone. The staff conduct meetings to decide the theme for the week's daily devotion program, based on what is happening in the community, and travel to the villages to interview sources and do scriptwriting.

The FSP Good Governance Project Officer is responsible for the fortnightly radio program and the newsletter as part of her other duties.

The FSP Over the Waves Project Officer produces the weekly radio program, and is producing 100 half-hour programs to go into multimedia kits that will be used for the school curriculum (Ministry of Education). She also edits out 10 minutes of content from each half-hour program and translates this into English for broadcast on the Education Ministry's Schools Broadcast programs on Radio Kiribati. The officer's media work is in addition to her other duties.

KANGO has four staff, but no officer works full time on media content.

The AMAK Legal Rights Training Officer is the only staff member involved in media work. He estimates that it takes two days to prepare for a radio interview.

NTNK has four full-time officers, and actors, singers and interviewees are contracted as needed.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

As noted earlier, the Kiribati Protestant Church Communications Manager has had 27 years media experience as the BPA Radio Manager and he has a certificate in journalism.

None of the Catholic Church media staff have formal media qualifications but two of the staff have been to a PNG video production course and undertaken a USP Foundation Science course.

The FSP Good Governance Project Officer has a diploma in veterinary technology and has received no media training.

The FSP Over the Waves Project Officer has a degree in media arts (University of Waikato, New Zealand). Before that she was a journalist for the *Te Uekara* newspaper for 20 years and has worked at Newair radio.

The AMAK Legal Rights Training Officer has had no media training and none of the KANGO staff have received any media training.

The two NTK principals have been trained overseas. The Director has 28 years television and media experience and the Producer has attended short-term regional media and television courses. According to the Director, recruits need self-motivation, an ability to know and appreciate the needs of the people and culture, lack of shyness, an ability to stand back, to have some kind of vision and not get too caught up in the everyday, dedication and to be prepared to work long hours beyond the government norm:

Formal journalism skills are of course important, but the above are equally important. The Government sector is full of people who regularly attend conferences and trainings, but do not put it into practise when they return — either they just give up or lament the lack of able leadership, especially at the editorial and sub-editorial levels.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The NGOs listed the following training priorities:

- Training in using the latest computer editing software and information technology; how to use the recording panel in the Radio Kiribati editing suite, and digital recording equipment both for radio and television. 'These are necessary because we are so behind in technology and want to learn and to be up-to-date. Also, with the setting up of a new TV station in Kiribati, we may now want to produce TV programs.' (Catholic Media officer)
- Training in writing skills for the different media (newsletter and radio) and 'how to write in such a way that the people will understand the message we are trying to convey'. (FSP Good Governance Project Officer)
- Interviewing and writing skills, and the ability to translate material from Kiribati to English and vice versa. (FSP Over the Waves Project Officer)
- Training in how to use a computer and the different software programs; laws relating to the media (like libel and defamation laws), and how to prepare a program for radio, print or television. (AMAK)
- In the case of NTK staff, the further training needs involve three-month attachments to functioning organisations overseas where staff can be exposed to competent camera operators, sound recordists and production managers.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

Some of the equipment used by the Kiribati Protestant Church to produce *Te Mauri* is listed in Section 2.7, Equipment Resources. It also has a hand-held tape recorder and a hi-fi stereo system that it uses to record its radio programs. The Communications Manager would like some video cameras because the Church has almost completed a new multimedia studio that will have a television studio. This will enable the Church to produce local content for the new television station.

The Catholic Church has three computers (one with internet connection), a printer, a studio control room, a mixer for sound editing, a digital recording studio, telephones, a fax machine, a television

monitor, one video camera and a video editing console machine at the St Paul's Communication Centre. The media officer interviewed said that email has improved communications as they can now 'just send the BPA information by email if we want something to be broadcast for the Catholic community'.

FSP's Good Governance Project Officer uses a computer (with MS Publisher and PageMaker to produce the newsletter), has access to the internet, a fax machine and photocopier, and shares one tape recorder. She said this is not adequate because they need more up-to-date equipment. 'I also see the possibility of putting our programs on TV but we will need new equipment for this.'

FSP's Over the Waves Project Officer uses one computer, a tape recorder (shared) and telephone. She also said this is inadequate. 'I need to have my own internet access to do research and my own printer to print out my radio scripts. There is only one computer in this office that has internet access [located in the administration section within the same building].'

KANGO has a computer (with internet connection), a tape recorder (borrowed from FSP), a digital camera and telephone. It needs a photocopier. 'At the moment we are using the machine at the FSP office, which is 20 minutes away by bus.' KANGO is also setting up a Resource Centre for its members where they can have access to documents and manuals. The centre will have computers with internet access that the members can use for research and information.

AMAK has one computer without internet access, a telephone and access to the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs fax machine in Bairiki (one hour by bus). The officer needs a photocopier to print out pamphlets (Kiribati does not have any commercial printer).

NTNK has all the basics up to television broadcast standard, but another computer and edit system is urgently required to allow training and to meet the increased production demand.

4.8 NGO media processes

The Catholic Church is charged 50 cents a minute to broadcast its programs on Radio Kiribati. This includes the five-minute daily devotions, Bible Reflection and Church News program and the recordings of its church services. The Church does not have a qualified technician so 'we always call the BPA and they send over their technician who sometimes don't charge us when they come over in their spare time'.

FSP's Over the Waves Project Officer records the radio program at Newair radio 'because it's cheaper and BPA charges \$100 for every broadcast'. FSP's Good Governance Project Officer said:

It would be good if KIMA could conduct more conferences and training workshops to help us understand more clearly about the important roles we play and improve on the interaction between ourselves [NGOs and the media].

NTNK said a 30-minute radio program costs AU\$120 for airtime and if they do not produce it, AU\$1.00 per minute. A 30-second radio spot is AU\$0.50 per second and \$AU6.80 per 50 words. A half-page newspaper advertisement is AU\$50, and a full page AU\$100.

NTNK's Director said NGO media processes could be improved if the media was 'more active and curious':

Currently there is too much reliance on the reproduction of press releases, which means very few real stories are written or broadcast. We have found that there is only one media organisation — Newair FM — which has an informal system of rounds — they ring every few weeks and ask if there are any stories. They find the newspapers tend to copy their initiatives.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

There is a proposed Catholic community radio station, Heart FM94, 'Empowering People, Building Community'. It has been granted a broadcast licence. The radio station will be established at the studios of the St Paul's Communication Centre in Tarawa in response to the needs of the people of Tarawa and other islands in Kiribati:

It will serve as a vital link between members of the Catholic community and between the Catholic community and the wider community of Kiribati. It will bring news and views, education and health, culture, customs and traditions that empower the people all within a Catholic tradition of communication. (Catholic Media Officer)

Heart FM94 will provide religious services and programs as well as community programs produced and presented by members of the community. Finance to acquire a 2 to 5 kilowatt transmitter is being sought.

Although Heart FM94 will not be a commercial radio station it will have some opportunity for soliciting limited sponsorship. A staff member will be put in charge of marketing the station and acquiring sponsorship. The Church notes that Kiribati is a very poor country so there is limited opportunity for this activity.

4.10 Funding for media content

A local businessman who owns Moel Ltd (a local supermarket chain) has offered to pay for all the Kiribati Protestant Church radio programs on Radio Kiribati. The same businessman also offered to pay Radio Kiribati for all the airtime charges for the Catholic Church programs for one year (April 2004 to April 2005). The Catholic Church also received AU\$300 in 2004 from the Taiwanese Embassy in Tarawa to buy a printer.

FSP's Good Governance Project is funded by donor funds from NZAID, DFID and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The Over the Waves Project is funded by DFID.

KANGO's NGO Capacity Building Project (2002–06) is funded by the European Union. KANGO receives AU\$200,000 a year and part of this goes toward producing the newsletter.

Through MISA, AMAK has an annual budget of AU\$10,000 for radio, print and television promotions and radio interviews related to the welfare of women. A breakdown of these funds was not available.

NTNK receives funding from government ministries, NGOs and donors:

- Kiribati Association of Seamen's Wives: drama production on alcohol abuse and drug trafficking by I-Kiribati seamen, funded by the World Bank Small Project Fund, the South Pacific Marine Service, and the New Zealand High Commission.
- FSP, Kiribati: solid waste disposal video, funded by SPREP.
- FSP, five dramas on environmental issues, funded by the Australian High Commission.
- Kiribati Association for the Disabled: five dramas about disabled people and their lives, NZAID.
- The School for the Disabled: raising awareness of the needs of disabled children, and the school, funded by UK High Commission.
- Unimwaane Association of Maiana: three days of community cultural celebrations for their elders, funded by UNESCO.
- AMAK: handicrafts of Kiribati with a view to income generation, funded by New Zealand High Commission.
- AMAK and Ministry of Health: HIV/AIDS, funded by Canada Fund and the SPC.
- AMAK and MISA: women in development, funded by NZAID, Traditional Land Owners of Tarawa Association with MISA; journey of Nei Matangare, a drama on urban migration, funded by AusAID and UNICEF.
- Te le ni Kiribati Dance Group: video funded by UNESCO.
- Te Keanginimarawa Dance Group: video on preparation for a Pacific Arts and Cultural Festival, funded by the SPC.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

In its Strategic Plan 2004–06 to strengthen NGOs, KANGO says that:

The legitimacy and credibility of NGOs in Kiribati is very poor. If we may say, most NGOs in Kiribati may be referred to as briefcase NGOs moving from place to place, therefore often experiencing deficits in program planning and implementation, thus require assistance with a range of activities including strategic planning, policy making, governance, personnel and financial management, impact assessment and performance reporting.

One of the areas KANGO lists for improvement is information sharing:

Most of KANGO Members are operating without an office and therefore, generally speaking, they are operating with lots of difficulties in producing and accessing timely and relevant information to support their development objectives. Only international affiliated NGOs and

CBOs in Kiribati, like FSPK, Peace Corps, Kiribati Red Cross, have been fully able to benefit from the opportunities provided by the new internet-based technologies that allow faster and cheaper access to information. In previous years, NGO leaders have called upon NGO coordinating bodies at the regional level such as PIANGO to help improve information flows and communication links between NGOs at the regional level and international level. KANGO will address this issue by strengthening its own information management systems and utilizing new internet-based technologies to become effective information clearing-house and communications network for civil society in Kiribati and outside.

KANGO goes on to say the goal for the sector should be 'to provide relevant and timely information on issues and concerns affecting NGOs, CBOs and civil society at large in Kiribati'. As part of this:

Two of the key objectives are to produce and distribute newsletters highlighting the work of KANGO, its members, announcing upcoming events and exploring issues of interest to KANGO, its stakeholders, partners and donors; and to establish and maintain a KANGO website with information relevant to the needs of Kiribati NGOs, international donors and other stakeholders, and conduct awareness and training for all KANGO members on the use and application of new information technologies.

In addition to this, training in media awareness and media advocacy would improve NGO media profiles and use of the media. Currently, NGOs are under-utilising the media, and do not have much capacity in this area. Cost of access to the media may also need some consideration to encourage more NGO involvement, and to address sustainability of NGO media when donor-funded media projects cease.

¹ Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1168527.stm.

² See <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1836.htm>.

³ Source: <http://www.state.gov/drl/rls/hrrpt/2002/18248.htm>.

⁴ Permanent Secretary for Communication, in Pacific Magazine online, March 2005, <http://www.pacificislands.cc/pm32005/pmdefault.php?urlarticleid=0011>.

⁵ The currency in Kiribati is Australian dollars (AU\$).

⁶ No reason was given for this, but in other countries surveyed it has been noted that government departments and NGOs still prefer to use the overall national broadcast service, rather than newer FM stations.

⁷ Dated and poorly functioning equipment is an issue for a number of public broadcasting organisations in the survey.

⁸ The survey in Kiribati was conducted in mid to late December 2004.

⁹ In English this means 'news from the government'.

¹⁰ These were produced for the first time for the 2004 elections.

NAURU

BACKGROUND

The Republic of Nauru is a raised coral atoll in the central Pacific, just south of the equator and west of the Gilbert Islands of Kiribati. It was formerly called Pleasant Island. As a result of phosphate mining, the island's interior is environmentally devastated and there is only a narrow band of habitable land along the coast. Nauru had an estimated population of 12,800 in 2003. The majority of the population are indigenous Nauruans of predominantly Micronesian origin, and the remainder mostly I-Kiribati, Tuvaluan and Chinese peoples.

Germany annexed Nauru in 1888 and, following the discovery of phosphate, commenced phosphate mining in 1907 with the establishment of the Pacific Phosphate Company (a German–British consortium). Nauru was captured by Australian forces in 1914. In 1920 a League of Nations mandate named Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom as co-trustees of Nauru, with Australia the administering power. Phosphate mining was taken over by the British Phosphate Company (owned jointly by the Australian, New Zealand and UK governments).

During World War II Nauru was occupied by Japanese forces. In 1947 Nauru was placed under United Nations trusteeship, with Australia as the administering power on behalf of the co-trustees (Australia, New Zealand and the UK). The British Phosphate Company resumed mining and continued operations until 30 June 1970, when control passed to the Nauru Phosphate Corporation. In 1966 Nauru became self-governing and, after a two-year constitutional convention, Nauru became an independent state on 31 January 1968.

In 1989 Nauru filed a suit against Australia in the International Court of Justice in The Hague for damages caused by mining while the island was under Australian jurisdiction. Australia settled the case out of court in 1993, agreeing to pay AU\$107 million¹ and to assist Nauru with environmental rehabilitation.

Nauru has a Westminster parliamentary system of government. The president is elected by and responsible to the unicameral Parliament and, in a variation of the Westminster system, is both head of government and head of state. The Nauruan Parliament consists of 18 members of Parliament, who are elected every three years by resident Nauruan citizens over the age of 20. The President appoints four or five members of Parliament to form the Cabinet. There are no formal political parties in Nauru. Candidates stand as independents, contesting elections on the basis of personal or family ties. Government is formed by a coalition of like-minded parliamentarians, with a majority of at least 10 votes. Changes of government between elections, via shifting parliamentary coalitions, are common.

For the first two decades following independence Nauru's political system was very stable. However, recently there has been considerable political instability; Nauru has had six presidents since January 2003. In 2004 the Hon. Ludwig Scotty was elected President and has introduced a reformist agenda.

Nauru faces serious economic challenges. It has insufficient arable land to produce food and limited supplies of natural water, and must import most of its necessities. The phosphate industry has been its main revenue source since 1945, but production has declined dramatically since the 1980s. Although the mining of Nauru's remaining phosphate reserves might provide some revenue, this would require significant and costly repairs to infrastructure. The country placed much of its phosphate revenue in trust funds to ease the transition away from mining, but bad

investments and corruption led to a serious depletion of the fund in the 1990s. By mid-2004 Nauru faced bankruptcy, and had to sell off its remaining assets in the trust (mainly Australian property).

Poor diet and lifestyle changes have also had a serious impact on the health of Nauruans. Nauru has one of the world's highest levels of diabetes, renal failure and heart disease, affecting more than 40 per cent of the population.²

With the exception of one interview which was completed in late 2004, the survey data in Nauru was collected in March to April 2005.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Nauru Media Bureau is part of a government department, and it is the only media outlet on the island. There is no media legislation covering its operation. The only legislation sighted for the survey was the *Wireless Telegraphy Act 1974*. Section 4, Licences, states:

The Cabinet may make regulations to provide for licences to establish, erect, maintain or use stations and appliances for the purpose of transmitting or receiving messages by means of wireless telegraphy to be granted for such periods and on such conditions and on payment of such fees, if any, as are prescribed:

Provided that the Cabinet may by regulations authorise the establishment, erection, maintenance or use of any such station or appliance as may be specified thereby by any person or class of persons without a licence.

In 2002 the *Telecommunication Act* resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Nauru Telecommunication Corporation (RONTel). The Act sets out the telecommunication services to be provided and the rates, charges and licensing system. The current ICT infrastructure is described as substandard and telephone access and usage is limited.³

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

Nauru's Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, but does not include guarantees for freedom of the press or the right to government information:

12.1 *A person has the right to freedom of expression.*

2. *Except with his consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his right to freedom of expression.*
3. *Nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with, or in contravention of, the provisions of this Article to the extent that that law makes provision –*
 - (a) *that is reasonably required in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health;*
 - (b) *that is reasonably required for the purpose of protecting the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons or the private lives of persons concerned in legal proceedings, preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence or maintaining the authority and independence of the courts;*
 - (c) *that is reasonably required for the purpose of regulating the technical administration or technical operation of telephony, telegraphy, posts, wireless broadcasting or television or restricting the establishment or use of telephonic, telegraphic, wireless broadcasting or television equipment or of postal services; or*
 - (d) *that regulates the use of information obtained by public officers in the course of their employment.*

An interesting aspect of this section is that it includes provision for the government to regulate the media.

According to the Transparency International National Integrity Systems Nauru Country Report, 2004, most of the information and documents from public authorities are protected by the *Official Information Act 1976*. The report's authors state that 'public authorities view members of the public with suspicion if they enquire about such information and documents' and there is no provision or law which prescribes how the public can access the information and documents.⁴

1.3 Media regulation

As noted, the Nauru Media Bureau is a department of government. Until recently, the Nauru Media Bureau did not cover opposition views. With the change of government in 2004 the situation has eased slightly. During the election campaign in 2004 a program that was critical of government financial management was aired on television a number of times,⁵ and different candidates' political rallies were also televised.

1.4 Defamation

Libel laws are based on UK statute law and, as the media is government operated, are unlikely to be an issue for the media.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There appear to be no local content or community service requirements. *The Wireless Telegraphy Act* only covers very basic technical and administrative requirements. The national television service was established with assistance from Television New Zealand (TVNZ). As part of this a basic policy was drawn up, which included local programming objectives to:

- Present a program schedule that reflects and promotes cultural, educational, community and social interest in Nauru;
- Present a daily 5–10-minute local news program;
- Televisе major local sports and social events;
- Compile and present a weekly 15–30-minute current affairs and local interest program, within 12 months of commissioning;
- Promote local television program-making skills.⁶

While government has employed a number of staff at the Bureau (currently 20 but in 2002 estimated at 32, with 16 in the television service), the local production output for radio and television has been minimal.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The Nauru Media Bureau (radio, television and a newspaper) is part of the Ministry of Island Development and Industry. Radio was established in 1968 and television in 1991. Despite the reasonable staffing levels, the Bureau is the least well performing of all government radio and television stations surveyed. Its lack of local production output (radio, television and print media) predates Nauru's current financial difficulties and suggests that there are more fundamental problems related to the Bureau's mandate and management.

1.7 Government funding for media

The Nauru Media Bureau has an annual budget of AU\$769,335, of which AU\$650,000 is allocated for salaries. Due to Nauru's current economic situation the staff are being paid only a portion of their salaries.

2. MEDIA SECTOR**2.1 Media outlets**

The Nauru Media Bureau operates:

- Radio Nauru, broadcasting on FM 88.8mz.
- The *Naoero Bulletin*, published fortnightly (although sometimes not as often due to the financial restraints). It is published in English and 500 copies are printed for distribution around the island.
- Nauru Television (NTV). Until recently NTV transmitted on three separate channels 24 hours per day: Channel 1, ABC Asia Pacific via satellite; Channel 2, the Star Sports Program from Hong Kong via satellite; and Channel 3 CCTV9 (Chinese television) via satellite. Channels 2 and 3 are currently not operational due to problems with the receiver.

2.2 Program format of radio and television stations

Nauru Radio broadcasts mainly music programs, with local and overseas news (Radio Australia), and a few information programs presented by government.

In addition to the ABC Asia Pacific programs broadcast on NTV, there is a weekly local television news service aired on Fridays at 8 pm. There is no television schedule because the programs broadcast on the three channels (when operational) are direct from satellite feeds and carry their own logos.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The *Naoero Bulletin* contains mainly government announcements and news.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

The target audience is all people in Nauru. Radio Nauru does have a mix of music programs, such as listener's choice, a children's session, local artists, Australian country, gospel music and songs of worship, and hospital-hour requests. Radio and television used to cover the whole island, but recent reports suggest the transmission reaches only half the country due to technical problems.

2.5 Audience research

There has been no audience research and, as there is only one television and radio station, targeting audiences 'is not a matter of concern'. The Media Bureau assumes that everyone on the island is watching its television programs and listening to the programs on radio.

According to the Director of the Nauru Media Bureau:

We rarely receive feedback from our audiences, actually, we don't get feedback at all, whether in writing or by phone calls. The only kind of feedback we get is something like meeting a friend of mine after hours, and telling me that he missed the movie last night, and that it was a good movie and if I could arrange for a replay another time. Or, people dropping in the studio asking about the song that was played on radio, that it was a nice song and if we could dub a copy for him.

2.6 NGO and government access

Government and NGOs have to pay to have advertisements broadcast and for program time. Community announcements are broadcast at no cost on radio, but there is a charge for television. Rates for buying airtime on television and radio are done in package deals for 15 to 30 minutes duration:

Local business company AU\$300 per month

Government and agencies AU\$100 per month

Non-profit organisation AU\$50 per month

There is no additional charge for the number of times a program is aired in one day.

The Bureau has not produced any advertisements for television. It does produce written notices for television.

The *Naoero Bulletin* accepts articles from government departments and agencies, the public and not-for-profit organisations, free of charge.

2.7 Journalism resources

The Nauru Media Bureau has four journalists and one news editor. The minimum level of education for recruits is Form 4. None of the journalists has a tertiary qualification.

The television news is not scripted as there is no scriptwriter. The presenter reads the news from notes that include the story titles and important points.

Equipment resources

The equipment is old, and there is very little of it. The Bureau has a digital still camera and two computers, one of which is on loan. This equipment is used to produce the *Bulletin*. There is no internet access. There is one portable tape recorder and two old video cameras that are working. Audio is recorded using camera microphones. There is an audio mixer and old analogue production and editing equipment. Radio and television have no computers. The one studio is shared by radio

and television. Parliamentary sittings tie up production staff and technical resources as the sessions are recorded for broadcast on television.

The power outages effecting Nauru also impact on the Bureau's operations, along with the financial constraints, which can limit paper and tape supplies.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

Radio Nauru and NTV are currently broadcasting one local news bulletin a week. There are no local current affairs programs on radio or television. Previously Radio Nauru aired news (local and/or regional) every two hours.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

The maximum number of local stories produced is 7 per week and these are broadcast in Nauruan. No figure was given for the *Bulletin*, but it usually consists of 12 pages. News stories are shared between radio, television and print.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

Local news covers health, education, the environment, agriculture, updates on the supply of electricity, shipments of fuel and food, and news on visiting health specialists.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

News is compiled from government press releases and notices, and interviews or coverage of government events.

2.12 Media access to government content

Government sends press releases and notices to the Bureau, and may contact the Bureau to request that it cover a government activity. Parliament is broadcast live on NTV. Hansard is not up to date due to the lack of equipment to record parliamentary sessions and the necessary transcription staff. The current parliamentary staff have been schooled in English, and also find it difficult to produce the sections that are spoken in Nauruan, and this impacts on the speed of transcription. It is estimated that Hansard is at least 12 months behind.

Government does not have a website.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

The apparent lack of commitment to producing regular local news or information programs on radio and television, despite reasonable staffing levels, is a major constraint, along with the lack of trained journalists and inadequate technical resources.

2.14 Industry training

There has also been very little commitment to training and developing the journalism and production staff, and this has seriously limited the local production capacity of the Bureau. The Director reports that there is no on-the-job training provided and that the staff have not undertaken any other in-country training in the last five years.

2.15 Threats to funding

There were no threats reported, but the Bureau's technical resources are very depleted and aged.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

No code of ethics has been developed for the journalists at the Media Bureau.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

There is no national media association in Nauru and it is very unlikely that one will be established, given that there is only one media outlet and it is government owned.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

The Nauru Media Bureau would benefit from a whole-of-bureau strategy that:

- Clearly articulates what the role and local production output of the Bureau should be;

- Reviews the number of staff positions, the ratio of administrative and technical staff to journalists and production staff (administrative and technical staff currently make up over half the total staff component) and the duties of each staff member;⁷
- Reviews the training requirements of the journalism and production staff, and devises a comprehensive in-country training program to address these needs;
- Engages a mentor and trainer who can work with the staff on the job over three months, to improve the output and standard of local production (radio, television and print media). This mentor/trainer should then return for follow-up training at least six months after the original training to reinforce new work practices and build on these;
- Identifies the technical resources required to improve the production of local content, in particular computer-based digital recording and editing facilities, which are cost effective and easy to use.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

The Nauru Media Bureau functions as a quasi-government media unit. It is sent press releases or notices by government and covers government activities and announcements as required. This can include interviews for radio and television.

Nauru has the following government departments: Public Service, Civil Aviation, Foreign Affairs, Youth Affairs, Education, Works and Community Services, Finance, Island Development and Industry, Transport, Environment and Internal Affairs, Health and Medical Services, Sports, Women's Affairs, and Culture and Tourism. The following are statutory corporations: Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority, the Republic of Nauru Finance Corporation, Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust, RONTel, Bank of Nauru, Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation, Nauru Air Corporation, Nauru Agency Corporation, Nauru Insurance Corporation, Nauru Phosphate Corporation, Eigigu Holding Corporation, and Nauru Shipping Agent.

The more media-active departments and corporations are: Health, Women's Affairs, Education, and the Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority. All press releases and notices have to be approved by the Director or Departmental Secretary.

Human resources

The President's releases are written by the Presidential Counsel.

The Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority has a full-time officer producing a newsletter with a part-time assistant, and there are four officers in the Health Promotion Unit (Department of Health and Medical Services), a coordinator, a graphics officer, an assistant health educator and a typist clerk.

Officers from Women's Affairs present a weekly talk program on Radio Nauru.

In the Department of Education the scholarship officer and the curriculum officer produce press releases and notices for approval by the Director of Education.

3.2 Government media processes

There is no established process or whole-of-government communication strategy. Government contacts the Media Bureau as required.

3.3 Government department media content

The Health Promotion section of the Department of Health produces a newsletter every three months, titled *Healthy Life*, depending on the supply of paper. It prints 40 to 50 copies. The focus of the newsletter is preventative medicine, and its production is funded by the World Health Organization (WHO). Health Promotion may also purchase time on NTV for announcements for international days such as World Tuberculosis Day. It used to have a weekly timeslot on NTV, but this is now monthly due to problems with resources. Health also organises for the Media Bureau to cover health issues, workshops and visiting consultants in its news services.

The Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority monthly newsletter is produced every two months. The focus is on fisheries, marine resources and training in Nauru, and regional projects.

Fisheries sends the bulk of its newsletters in PDF format to save on paper, and prints around 100 copies.

The Department of Women's Affairs appears to be the only government department with a regular program on Radio Nauru. The program discusses health issues, healthy lifestyles, diet and social issues.

The Department of Education produces press releases and notices on training and scholarships available.

The Department of Environment used to produce a newsletter that covered issues such as climate change and solid waste. It ceased production due to lack of resources and also because a Department survey found that people were not reading the newsletter because its style was too technical.

3.4 Media governance priorities

Health focuses on education and prevention, and Fisheries aims to educate the public about fisheries and marine projects to raise the level of awareness about these activities. Women's Affairs focuses on increasing healthy lifestyles.

3.5 Target audiences

The government press releases and notices target the whole public. The government newsletters target government and other key stakeholders, with a small number sent to public outlets.

3.6 Qualifications and training

The government officers have not received training in media advocacy or production, and have had to learn through practice on the job. Fisheries staff will be undertaking a work attachment at the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia.

3.7 Equipment

Health and Fisheries both have equipment (computers, graphics software, publishing software, scanner and printer) to produce their newsletters. The Health equipment was funded by WHO, while Fisheries has funded its own equipment. Health said it requires a digital camera and eMac computer and software. Government officers can also access the internet, although this is not available to all officers individually.

3.8 Government-media relationships

There is a small amount of government media production, and very little use by individual government departments of radio and television information programs. This is surprising given the number of media production and journalism staff employed at the Bureau who could support this production.

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

The serious financial challenges facing government currently are impacting on available resources such as paper for newsletters and tapes for radio or television programs. However, prior to the current economic situation, it appears that successive governments have not made extensive use of the Nauru Media Bureau to produce information programs, magazine programs or talkback.

Some considerations to address this include:

- Government training in media awareness and advocacy so that senior government ministers and bureaucrats have a better appreciation of why and how to use the media to inform the public;
- The development of a government communications strategy, including the appointment of specific media spokespeople in each department and establishing regular processes of news and information distribution via the Nauru Media Bureau (radio, television and print);
- Combined government and media training workshops aimed at improving the amount, variety and quality of local information content produced. This could include news, information programs, talkback, magazine programs, and radio and television spots;
- Developing a public service broadcasting policy and exploring the feasibility of re-establishing the Nauru Media Bureau as a statutory authority, at arm's length from government;

- Initiating a review of the Nauru Media Bureau, staffing structure, staff roles, training requirements, production outputs and technical resources, to streamline its operations and improve local production output;
- Government to consider appointing a camera operator to the parliamentary staff, and supplying the necessary equipment to videotape Parliament so that the Media Bureau can concentrate on local production.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY

4.1 Civil society organisations

The Nauru Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NUANGO) has not been operational for two years. Government is assisting the NGO sector to revive this and to develop guidelines for the registration of NGOs. NGOs were described as being a fairly new concept in Nauru. There are, however, active community-based organisations (CBOs) such as church, sporting and market groups. According to the Director of the Nauru Media Bureau, the CBOs do not send press releases or notices to the Bureau. They also do not make radio or television programs.

4.2 Observations on civil society media capacity

It was not possible to interview any CBOs for the survey so it is difficult to ascertain why they are not making more use of the media. Lack of awareness of how to use the media and the reasons for doing so may be a factor, along with cost. While it is possible to have radio announcements broadcast at no cost, radio and television program time must be purchased, and for community groups the costs are high.

The more active CBOs could benefit from being included in the media awareness and media advocacy workshops suggested earlier for government and the media. The provision of free timeslots on Nauru radio and television for short community information segments could also help to increase the media output from this sector.

¹ All currency in this chapter is in Australian dollars (AU\$).

² Sources for background information are: <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0835013.html>; <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/16447.htm>; <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/nauru/>.

³ 'Nauru ICT Use in Education', UNESCO Meta-survey on the Use of Technologies in Education, 2005, p. 185.

⁴ Transparency International, National Integrity Systems Nauru Country Report Questionnaire, 2004, p. 21.

⁵ This was an Australian program, Four Corners, produced by the ABC.

⁶ James E. Bentley, Pacific Islands Television Survey Report, 2002, UNESCO, p. 18.

⁷ A proposed staff restructure of the Nauru Media Bureau 2004-05 lists 30 staff, 14 of whom are administrative or technical, including one cleaner. Four journalists are listed, as well as the Editor of the *Bulletin*, one radio producer, one radio programmer and three radio announcers.

NIUE

BACKGROUND

Niue is one of the largest raised coral atolls in the world, with a total land area of 261 sq km. It is situated some 2400 km north-east of Auckland, New Zealand, and its closest Pacific neighbour, Tonga, lies 480 km to the south.

Niueans are Polynesians with a distinct language and culture. Traditional Niuean society is characterised by an absence of a hereditary chiefly system. Niue became an independent nation in free association with New Zealand in 1974. Niueans have dual citizenship with New Zealand, and it is estimated that just over 20,000 Niueans live in New Zealand, while only around 1300 live in Niue (this is around 500 less than in 2003 due to the impact of Cyclone Heta in January 2004).

Niue's system of government is based on the Westminster system. The Niue Assembly consists of twenty members, fourteen of whom are elected by village constituencies and six from the common roll. The twenty members elect a Premier and the Premier selects three cabinet ministers from the remaining members. The members elect a Speaker from outside their ranks. A general election is held every three years.

The survey in Niue was conducted from August to October 2004.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

There is no single government department in Niue with overall responsibility for media and telecommunications policy, legislation and regulation. The Premier is in charge of the Broadcasting portfolio, and as such is responsible for the *Broadcasting Act of Niue 1989*. This Act established the Broadcasting Corporation of Niue (BCN) for the provision of television and radio services. The Department of Telecommunication and Post is responsible for policy, legislation, regulation, allocation and licensing of frequencies for telecommunications. The Deputy Premier is responsible for post, telecommunications, and information and communication technology development.

The legislation of relevance to the survey is:

- The *Broadcasting Act 1989*, mentioned above;
- The *Communications Act 1989* covers communications within Niue and between Niue and other countries. Cabinet may grant licences for public and commercial communications services, including radio and television, which specify radio frequencies and the protection of these licences. The Director of the Department of Telecommunication and Post may also grant commercial communications licences.

The print media are regarded as a common business and only require a business licence to be operational (*Business Licence Act 1971*, updated in 1997). This Act makes provision for the licensing of persons to carry on certain businesses.

The timeframe for applying and receiving approval for a new commercial radio or television licence depends on the body granting the licence, that is, Cabinet or the Director for Telecommunication and Post. Neither the *Communications Act* nor the *Broadcasting Act* refer to payment of annual licence fees by radio or television stations. However, the BCN pays NZ\$20 (approximately

AU\$18.63)¹ annually to the Department of Telecommunication and Post for each allocated radio and television frequency.

Of less immediate relevance to media, is the *Film and Public Entertainment Act 1979*. This makes provision for the regulation and control of the exhibition of films and public entertainment. The Film and Public Entertainment Control Board censors and approves films for exhibition and grants licences to persons wishing to exhibit films.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

Niue's Constitution does not refer to either freedom of speech, freedom of expression or freedom of press. It is the only Pacific Island constitution reviewed for this survey that does not contain a reference to at least one of these guaranteed freedoms. There is also no separate freedom of information legislation.

1.3 Media regulation

Part of the *Communications Act* covers the establishment of a Program Advisory Committee of not less than three members and not more than six, to be appointed by Cabinet. This committee may advise licensees on all aspects of the services authorised by their licences, including the nature and diversity of their programs, the suitability of programs for Niue, the hours of transmission of services, and the amount of any fee which may be charged for the reception of the services. Areas of concern to the committee are:

- *Material offensive to community standards of behaviour in Niue;*
- *The depiction of sexual activities, violence and use of drugs;*
- *The amount of time to be assigned for educational, informational and religious programs;*
- *The classification of programs as suitable for transmission at various times of the day.*
(Communication Act, Section 3)

The Program Advisory Committee in consultation with the Film and Public Entertainment Control Board may also apply the same guidelines to program content as those adopted by the censor.

The *Communications Act* does not make specific reference to monitoring licensees' compliance with licence conditions. However it can be implied that the Program Advisory Committee may monitor this, since it gives out guidelines for licence holders. The Act does mention that Cabinet or the Director may refuse renewal of a licence if it is of the opinion that the applicant failed to comply with any of the conditions of the licence. In terms of newspapers, there are no specific conditions, since the required licence is a business licence.

The Program Advisory Committee has not functioned in recent years, and the BCN reports that it has no record of a directive from the Committee since BCN became a corporation in 1989.

The BCN's Board of Directors can hear complaints from the public and oversees journalism standards within the Corporation. The Board does not review the news that goes to air, but can review content after receiving a letter of complaint from the public or other sectors including government.

1.4 Defamation

Defamation is actionable without proof of special damage; that is, it is not necessary to allege or prove special damage (*Niue Act 1966*, section 716, Libel and Slander).

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

The *Communications Act 1989* does not include specific local content requirements or program quotas. The *Broadcasting Act of Niue* does provide general outlines for local content, but no content quotas. However, there is a provision for the Program Advisory Committee to advise on the amount of time for showing educational, information and religious programs and for the classification of programs suitable for transmission at various times of the day.

There is no specific provision for community service timeslots in either the *Communications Act* or the *Broadcasting Act*. The amount of time allocated to community service on the BCN is determined by the management. In the past the BCN has offered timeslots free to groups and individuals fundraising for particular causes.

1.6

Public service broadcasting

The *Broadcasting Act of Niue 1989* contains the following objectives:

- *To provide for national broadcasting to be controlled by a corporation which, subject to this Act, acts as a trustee of the national interest and operates its services with the maximum independence;*
- *To provide a means of ensuring that television and radio programming are compatible with the identity and culture of Niue;*
- *To provide for the ultimate accountability of the broadcasting system to the Niue Legislative Assembly through the Minister and Cabinet.*

Program functions and powers of the BCN listed in the Act are:

- *To ensure that each Service operates as a public service to provide and produce programs which inform, educate and entertain;*
- *To establish a system for the gathering and provision of television and radio news;*
- *To purchase or acquire the right for programs of public interest such as sport, events, meetings and functions;*
- *From time to time commission programs, audience research, and market or technical research surveys.*

The section on program standards notes that in addition to any guidelines from the Program Advisory Committee, the BCN should provide a range of programs that:

- *Cater in a balanced way for the diversity of interests in the community;*
- *Ensure that the Niuean identity is developed and maintained;*
- *Ensure that the news gathering is accurate and impartial;*
- *Balance the discussion of controversial issues by seeking different viewpoints;*
- *Ensure that programs maintain law and order and the privacy of the individual.*

With regard to advertising, the BCN has to take into account any Cabinet policies on advertising and any guidelines set by the Program Advisory Committee.

The *Broadcasting Act* gives the BCN the right to exercise its powers and functions in respect of a particular program, the gathering or presentation of news, or preparation or presentation of current affairs programs, contracts for the provision of programs and the staffing of the Corporation. The Act also states that the BCN:

Shall have regard to the general policy of the government in relation to broadcasting or the functions and powers of the Corporation as that policy is communicated to the Corporation from time to time by Cabinet; and shall comply with any directions by Cabinet given to the Corporation by notice in writing pursuant to any such policy. (Broadcasting Act, Section 8)

The government appoints the Board of Directors, consisting of four people representing different interest areas (commerce, youth, women and religion) and three ex-officio members: the Financial Secretary, the Director of Community Affairs and the General Manager. One of the tasks of the Board is to 'maintain the integrity and independence of the Act subject to the provisions of the Act'. (Section 10, 3b)

Another task of the Board, noted earlier, is to handle public complaints about content.

The Board appoints the General Manager, and the General Manager reports directly to the Board. The General Manager's position is advertised with criteria for applications.

In an amendment to the *Broadcasting Act* in 1997, the government changed the terms of the Board members from three years to two, removed the incumbent General Manager from the Board and reduced the contract period of the General Manager from five years to two years.

1.7

Government funding for media

The BCN receives on average around NZ\$190,000 annually from government, and has to raise another NZ\$100,000 through program sales, advertising, licence fees, CD sales and sponsorship.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

There are three media organisations in Niue:

- The BCN operates the national public service radio and television stations, Radio Sunshine and TV Niue. According to the BCN, Radio Sunshine is the most popular medium, particularly the morning to early afternoon timeslots. Television is preferred by most people at night unless it is radio talkback evening (Monday). Radio Sunshine broadcasts six days a week and TV Niue broadcasts seven days a week at night.
- The *Niue Star* is the only locally produced print media on the island. It is a fortnightly newspaper compiled and produced in Niue but printed and distributed from Auckland, New Zealand. The paper operates as part of Jackson's Enterprises, founded by Michael Jackson, a Niue politician. The newspaper is funded through advertising and sales. The paper has received equipment funded by UNESCO. Its office was damaged by Cyclone Heta and it is currently operating out of a home office.
- *Niue News* is a weekly online news service (<http://www.niuenews.nu/>) privately owned, operated and funded by Stafford Guest. *Niue News* describes itself as the island's only independent news outlet. It says its 'correspondents and editors have no political affiliations and are not employed in any government departments', and that it 'supports good governance, transparency and accountability' and it is free.²

2.2 Program format of radio and television stations

Radio Sunshine is a community radio station featuring music, community messages, programs produced by NGOs, a radio talkback evening and some local news. TV Niue broadcasts mainly overseas family-oriented programs with some local news (twice a week simulcast on radio) and coverage of important local events.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The *Niue Star* is a community-based newspaper that covers news and current issues for readers nationally and those living abroad. It describes itself as 'a tool for bridging the gap in the relationship amongst Niueans'.

Niue News focuses mainly on local news of importance to users of the internet who may not have the time to spend reading in-depth coverage. The news site has been revamped to allow instant updates of news.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

BCN programs target all age groups with specific timeslots for certain ages. The *Niue Star* also targets all age groups, but the Editor said the older generation are more serious about reading the whole paper. *Niue News* aims at all age groups among those people who have internet access.

Prior to Cyclone Heta, TV Niue (BCN) reached 90 per cent of the island, and Radio Sunshine (BCN) had 97 per cent coverage. These percentages were based on spot checks of households. The main problem with the transmission coverage is difficulty with line-of-sight transmission due to the terrain.

The *Niue Star* is distributed across the island (230 copies). International distribution (600 copies) is available from specific outlets in New Zealand, and a small number of papers are distributed in Australia, mainly to Niuean families in Sydney. Editions of the newspaper are also available online at <http://www.niuean.com/niuestar/home.html> and some archival issues are at <http://www.niuean.com/niuestar/archives.html>.

Niue News is dependent on internet access, available to residences in the town area and some outside villages with a good landline connection. There are also limited customers who have access to the fast-speed Wi-Fi network.

2.5 Audience research

TV Niue ran an audience survey in 2001 but there was no professional analysis or report on its results. The BCN said findings indicated a strong preference for local content overall, with news programs being the most popular. The TV Niue survey was coordinated by the BCN in collaboration with the Niue Statistics and Census Office.

Lack of financial and human resources is the biggest drawback to more regular audience surveys.

The *Niue Star* has never conducted a reader survey. This is not considered necessary as reader interests are gauged through word of mouth and letters to the editor. According to the editor, the most popular segment is politics and related issues. Readers have also indicated considerable interest in local events and photographs featured in the paper.

Niue News has not conducted audience research and does not see it as relevant because of the number of hits the site gets from as far away as Norway and Canada.

2.6 NGO and government access

If an NGO or government department would like to produce a program and broadcast it on radio or television, they need to purchase broadcast time. For Radio Sunshine there is a standard cost under the Community Radio Access Scheme for a one-hour slot on radio of NZ\$50. However, in order to encourage the use of the radio, community groups have been given a free one-hour timeslot on Radio Sunshine indefinitely. This was also in response to concerns raised by some organisations that they should not pay the BCN for community-based content when the Corporation receives funding from government for public service content.

Radio Sunshine also has five timeslots each weekday to broadcast community announcements and messages. Each message costs NZ\$5.00.

TV Niue has a community announcement slot each night after the news. This consists of 30 to 120 seconds of graphics and music, and costs NZ\$20 for airtime and NZ\$5.00 for production. There is no specific rate for purchasing program time on television.

The *Niue Star* does not charge space for news or feature stories submitted by NGOs or government. When it prints sponsored articles, the articles are deemed as advertisements and are charged the usual advertising rates: NZ\$100 full page, NZ\$80 half page, NZ\$35 quarter page, and NZ\$15 for classifieds. The *Niue Star* has offered NGOs free space in return for news reports. However, only the Niue Island's Sports Association and National Olympic Committee (NISANOC) has taken up the offer. According to the newspaper, most other NGOs think that 'it is too much work to prepare and write a report for the paper'. Government departments are charged different rates depending on size of the space being used for publication and the frequency of advertising.

Niue News does not carry advertisements on its website, and said it would prefer to remain independent of advertising.

2.7 Journalism resources

The BCN employs two journalists, one with five and one with ten years experience; the two *Niue Star* journalists have three and five years experience; and the one journalist at *Niue News* has thirty years experience.

Both the BCN and *Niue Star* require completion of Form 6 and excellent writing skills. The two BCN journalists have formal qualifications in media or journalism: one has a Bachelor of Communication Studies, majoring in Television Production, from the Auckland University of Technology (1997), and the other has a Certificate of Journalism from the Wellington Polytechnic (1988) and is a Bachelor of Communication Studies, majoring in Multimedia, from the Auckland University of Technology (2000). The two journalists at the *Niue Star* have no formal journalism qualifications. The journalist at *Niue News* has a formal qualification but no details were given.

None of the journalists has a specialist degree or major in governance areas such as economics, politics, health or the environment, and no journalist is described as an investigative journalist.

Low staff levels make it difficult to release staff to study part time while working. There are no journalists currently doing this.

The salary range for journalists at the BCN is from NZ\$18,000 to NZ\$20,000 per annum; the *Niue Star* has no set pay rate or scale. The staff are paid on average NZ\$100–120 per week from the money received through advertisements and the sale of paper. Contributions to *Niue News* are all on a voluntary or goodwill basis.

Reasons cited for leaving the BCN and the *Niue Star* included wanting a more stable income, migration, job opportunities in other fields and seeking further training opportunities.

Equipment resources

The BCN has production, editing and presentation studios, video cameras, a computer-based editing system, the internet and telephones. The BCN says the equipment is adequate when it is functioning well. There is a major problem with service and maintenance of equipment as the current practice is to send it for repairs to New Zealand.

The *Niue Star* has two computers and two digital cameras. As noted earlier, following Cyclone Heta the *Niue Star* had to move its office to a home, as its offices were damaged. The paper is now being printed in Auckland. The Editor believes that two computers, two newspaper printing machines and a high-speed internet facility would be ideal for the production of the paper.

Niue News has a laptop computer, telephone and internet connection and said its current equipment was adequate.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

The BCN produces a local television news bulletin every Tuesday and Thursday. The average length of the bulletin is 20 minutes, and it contains bilingual content. The audio track is broadcast simultaneously on the radio, and there is no additional news produced for radio. There is also a radio talkback program every Monday from 7 pm to 10 pm. The full BCN news bulletin is not available online, but a simplified version consisting of photographs and short captions is posted on a Geocities/Yahoo free website (<http://www.geocities.com/niuepix>).

The BCN gauges the public's interest in news through its community radio notices, talkback radio, village meetings and people calling up the station with issues.

Niue Star staff also attend meetings and listen to comments from people to get ideas for what news is of public interest.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

The BCN produces 2 local stories a day, with an average of 5 local news stories per bulletin broadcast twice a week. Each bulletin is presented in both Niuean and English.

The *Niue Star's* local content varies but the usual number is 7 to 10 local stories in each issue. *Niue Star* uses both Niuean and English.

Niue News produces, on average, around 8 local news items per week in English only.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

The BCN listed social injustices, health and education as being of high priority; and the *Niue Star* listed health, education and accountability. *Niue News* covers anti-corruption practices and issues related to this, and critical analysis of 'government spin doctors', who do 'more harm than good' (Editor).

The Monday evening talkback program on Radio Sunshine deals with a range of good governance issues related to all sectors - government, village communities and religion. The program was initially broadcast in a morning timeslot, but two years ago listeners requested a shift to Monday evening (7 to 10pm) to allow those who worked during the day to participate. After Cyclone Heta, the local media became a prominent tool, in particular the radio talkback program, as it gave listeners a platform to raise concerns with the rebuilding efforts. Those in authority would listen and attempt to resolve issues (often as early as the next morning). The program was also popular during the lead-up to the general elections in April 2004. Some of the issues covered over the last few of years have been:

- Economic and social effects of proposed pay cuts to public servants.
- Who is responsible for passengers left stranded by Polynesian Airlines?
- Why is the Premier always out of the country?
- Are bulldozers ever going to be ready for plantation clearing?
- Rebuilding the hospital - who can help?
- Is it acceptable for pastors to receive wages for working on cyclone recovery tasks?
- Why are people not getting assistance with the re-roofing project?
- Is it ethical to offer rent-to-buy houses to homeless victims of the cyclone?

- Are there moral issues over uses of organic fertilisers and pest control?
- Should Asians be allowed work permits on Niue?
- Are women not up to politics or do we have hidden issue of gender equality?
- The Niue language is waving goodbye.
- What are people voting for?
- Is drawing of a lot appropriate for resolving a tie in the election of MPs?
- Mixing politics and religion - appointment of a pastor to the Public Service Commission.
- Government is less transparent over the new fish processing joint-venture.

None of the media surveyed had received donor funding to produce media governance content.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

The BCN uses interviews with sources, press statements, press briefings, local newsletters and the internet. Regional news sources include RNZI, as it carries live news bulletins and sports from New Zealand and the region, and can be relayed without editing; PINA Nius Online, because it is daily and easily accessible and adaptable for local release; TVNZ1 Network News daily bulletin, which often features news affecting Niueans; and ABC Asia Pacific News daily television coverage of international issues.

Niue News mainly gathers news through interviews. It also has verbal agreements over the right to use a number of other news sources, such as Pacific Island Report (an online news and features service), RNZI and Radio Australia. These are usually used in relation to local items or issues of local interest.

2.12 Media access to government content

The Niue government is currently making a transition from the old <http://www.gov.nu> to the recently developed <http://www.niuegov.com>. The old site posted press statements, speeches, budget details and an update of current developments in government. At the time of the survey the new site was still under development. The *Niue Fooo* newsletter, produced out of the Premier's Department, is also posted online and, according to the media, is useful for getting news leads.

The BCN has regular contact with the Premier's Department; the *Niue Star* also has contact with the Premier's Department; and *Niue News* said it did not access government content, as 'there is little trust in government news sources'.

There is no established media-government and/or media-NGO network and most contact is on ad hoc basis.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

The BCN cited limited staff and equipment, a low population base and small business sector, and a lack of understanding of what could be newsworthy among the different sectors.

The *Niue Star* said lack of equipment, staff and internet connectivity were problems.

2.14 Threats to funding

None of the media reported threats to funding from government or the corporate sector due to editorial content.

The researcher reports that government criticised the *Niue Star* during its first five years (1993–98) over editorial content. Letters to the editor discussing the spending of public funds and the accountability of government were published under a nom de plume for privacy and security. Ministers were concerned about this criticism and attempts were made to legislate to force writers to reveal their true identities.³ There were also verbal threats to remove the Editor. The situation changed with the election of a new government in 1998. The publisher and current Editor of the *Niue Star* is a Member of Parliament and a supporter of the current administration.

In the early 1990s a government minister discussed the possibility of the BCN becoming a government department. While no specific concerns about the BCN's operations were voiced at the time, the minister was of the opinion that government was in a better position to run the BCN.

2.15 Industry training

There is no in-country training institute in Niue that conducts journalism training. All formal journalism training is carried out at institutions overseas.

Training at the BCN is on an ad hoc basis for the production and development of news. Journalists are expected to do a lot of self-learning, including technical skills such as camera work and editing. BCN staff have received in-country as well as regional broadcast training through the SPC, PIBA (now merged with PINA) and PINA.

The *Niue Star* does not have an in-house training program. Recruits are expected to have good writing skills. The *Niue Star* has received limited assistance from the Commonwealth Press Union under a regional project through PINA.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

The industry has not developed a code of ethics. There is an employment policy guide for the BCN staff and the Board of Directors deals directly with ethical complaints. The *Niue News* Editor said the paper uses good journalistic principles as a guide.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

There is no national media association in Niue although there have been recent talks about this, and no industry-based council or tribunal that oversees journalism standards. The employment policy guide for the BCN staff and the Board of Directors deals with ethical complaints. As noted earlier, the BCN Board can hear complaints from the public and by default oversee journalism standards within the Corporation.

Defamation was raised as an issue by the *Niue Star*, and the Editor said this has made the paper 'more accountable to get the news accurate'. Concerns about content in the *Niue Star* can be taken up with the management and, in the past, grievances were settled in court.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

The majority of media content originates from government. This varies from a press statement and community messages to news interviews and various attempts at public awareness.

According to the researcher, media coverage of governance issues has been marginal, and the media's role and significance in the overall development of the country is often misunderstood. Some people believe that because Niue is small and information travels quickly there is little need for the mass media. The contention that the media is not telling the full story is often a case of 'the media not knowing the full story' from government, relying on leaks and sources outside government to get information.

The Constitution does not include guarantees for freedom of expression, freedom of the press and/or the right to receive information. This is an obstacle to media access to government information.

Limited resources are another major drawback for media developments. The lack of staff and necessary equipment often dictate the quality of news and other programs. In some cases this limits the media's ability to assist government and the civil sector in disseminating information.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR**3.1 Government sector media capacity**

The Premier has his own Private Secretary, who liaises with the media and organises interviews at the Premier's request. The Private Secretary advises the Premier on all matters, including interest from the local or international media.

There is also a Public Relations Officer (PRO) located in the Premier's Department, and a second officer fills in for the PRO when he is away. The PRO is responsible for publishing the *Niue Fooou* newsletter in print and on the government website. The PR office was established with no specific objectives but an understanding that its purpose is to cover all events and issues within government. Other government departments are being encouraged to use the office to promote their core services. The PRO promotes issues relevant to government either through organised press conferences, press releases or through the production of the *Niue Fooou*. The newsletter is printed in the Premier's office and distributed to government departments, as well as through online noticeboards and media outlets.

Niue Fooou, literally 'new Niue', was established by the Premier to inform Niueans of the government's recovery and rebuilding efforts following Cyclone Heta. It is seen as very informative, with its updates on the positive progress of Niue's recovery and rebuilding efforts. Its founders described *Niue Fooou* as 'a symbol of Niue's strength and confidence to rise above and rebuild Niue to be a much bigger and better nation'.⁴

In addition to the PRO and the Premier's Private Secretary, a government webmaster collates information from various government departments and puts it up on the internet without any editing or modification.

3.2 Government media processes

There is no set policy or regular process that government uses for briefing the media. This is generally carried out on an ad hoc basis. However, the *Niue Fooou* often acts as a means of providing news leads for media.

The government issues press releases in English. In terms of a preferred media outlet, there are only two major media organisations, the BCN and *Niue Star*. The government would like the BCN to release news items immediately or daily (but it does not have the resources to do this). The *Niue Star* is distributed abroad and so the government uses it to disseminate information to Niueans overseas.

There is a regular live broadcast of every Assembly meeting on Radio Sunshine, but Hansard is out of date due to a shortage of transcribers.

3.3 Government department media content

There are fifteen government departments and three corporate bodies. Only two government departments produce information for the media on a regular basis. In addition to the government press releases and the *Niue Fooou*, produced by the Premier's Office, the other department currently producing regular media content is the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). The DAFF program is broadcast on Radio Sunshine fortnightly for one hour. It is produced with assistance from the Niue Island Organic Farmer's Association (NIOFA).

The producers do not have the means for gathering production material from the field, and it is always difficult to get farmers to come in for the radio program. Hence the content is mostly interviews with key people within the department and officers on return from overseas workshops.

3.4 Media governance priorities

For the government, education is the priority governance issue.

3.5 Target audiences

The government, through the Premier's office, targets all Niueans, and the DAFF/NIOFA radio program targets growers and the unemployed. The government does not formally monitor the effectiveness of its media content. However, it is possible to see how many hits the *Niue Fooou* website receives.

3.6 Qualifications and training

There has been no media training provided for the Premier's Private Secretary (a lawyer) or the PRO (a university lecturer), nor has there been any media training for parliamentarians. The NGO officer who coordinates the DAFF program has received some media training (see Section 4.6, Media Training for NGO Officers, for details).

3.7 Equipment

The PRO relies on personal equipment for producing the *Niue Fooou*, including a digital camera, laptop and own transport for delivery. There is no budget allocation for equipping the PR office, and the officer felt obliged to use his own equipment. The PRO has been encouraged to carry on by the support of the readers of *Niue Fooou*.

DAFF has computers, internet access and one digital camera, but no recording equipment. The DAFF/NIOFA program is done live at the BCN.

3.8 Government-media relationships

The Premier and the media are reported to have a good working relationship, but this does not seem to extend to other ministers and parliamentarians.

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

There is a need to convince senior government officials that the media plays an important role in the development of a nation and, for this reason, the development of government media processes should be implemented from the top down. Government officers require training on the importance of the media and ways to utilise the media effectively.

Two streams of training could be relevant. The first would concentrate on media awareness and media advocacy, and could involve government, NGOs, the churches, the private sector and the media.

The second stream would include news-gathering techniques and how to write for print and to structure a radio program, and would target the specific needs of ministers and government officers. Media organisations should be included in this training to foster good working relationships between the two sectors. Government also requires equipment to produce media content, such as tape recorders, computers and cameras.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY

4.1 Civil society organisations

There are 15 registered members of the Niue Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NIUANGO). However, due to the destruction of registration records during Cyclone Heta, the exact number of registered NIUANGO members could not be confirmed. Government and NIUANGO differ on the defining principles for NGOs, and this has resulted in some tensions between the two sectors.

Of the registered NGOs, five produce some media content and four produce media governance content. The NGOs that are producing media content are:

- Niue Island Organic Farmer's Association (NIOFA)
- Niue National Council of Churches (NNCC)
- Niue Council of Women (NCW)
- Niue Youth Council (NYC)
- Niue Island's Sports Association and National Olympic Committee (NISANOC)

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

All NGO radio programs are produced live on a fortnightly basis. The NGO newspaper articles are also published fortnightly. The NGOs do not have the resources to produce media content more frequently, and also lack the technical capacity to prerecord their radio programs.

As mentioned, NIOFA produces a fortnightly one-hour radio program under the coordination of DAFF. NIOFA has won support from government with a memorandum of understanding to work toward making Niue an Eco-nation by 2010 (including funds and an office). One of NIOFA's main aims is to encourage growers to use alternative, toxic-free methods instead of harmful chemicals. Various campaigns, including a 30-second television advertisement, further enhance NIOFA's campaign.

NNCC produces morning devotion each weekday and a fortnightly one-hour program consisting of hymns, sermons and interviews on Radio Sunshine, and a column in *Niue Star*. The regular column in the newspaper is the work of a former pastor who writes from New Zealand, where he is now residing. Its content is described as 'very general'.

The NCW produces a fortnightly one-hour program on Radio Sunshine devoted to matters involving women.

The NYC also produces a fortnightly radio program. This covers a wide range of issues from health (such as on AIDS) to education (overseas and local training workshops). The NYC has been struggling to maintain a presence, with several unsuccessful attempts at producing its own newsletter and TV program in the past. It produced a website in 1998 (<http://webpost.net/ny/nyc/index.html>) but has not been able to post new materials since March 2002.

NISANOC prefers the print media for in-depth coverage. This is mainly due to availability of resources. Its reports are strictly on sports. It has an arrangement with Radio Sunshine to use five to ten minutes of the breakfast broadcast to convey messages and announcements free of charge.

All the NGO radio programs are predominantly in Niuean and newspaper articles can be in either English or Niuean.

NIUANGO did not list specific governance issues for media coverage. Its struggle for recognition from government has also not been highlighted in the media.

Most of the NGOs do not think specifically of governance issues, and seldom discuss governance issues in depth. NIOFA does cover issues related to health and economic development (farming concepts and food security). The NCW radio program sometimes discusses gender issues and equal opportunity but reports more on attendance at regional seminars and events.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

The community radio programs are often aired during working hours, although target audiences are not confined to the radio audience at the time the programs go to air.

NIOFA:	All age groups including primary school, growers, young farmers and the unemployed.
NNCC:	All ages.
NCW:	Women 30–70 years old.
NYC:	Young people 12–35 years old.
NISANOC:	All ages.

None of the NGOs have formally surveyed their media audiences. Feedback comes through word of mouth but also through indirect means, such as radio talkback. NIOFA has done an internal audit of its registered clients.

4.4 NGO media capacity

The NGOs do not have full-time media officers or paid staff. The officers are ‘volunteer’ staff: NIOFA has one officer; NCC has four (two alternate); NCW has two; NYC has four and NISANOC has two officers who work on media production.

On average the officers spend two hours a week on preparation and presentation of live radio programs and slightly longer on printed material that requires translating.

The specific media-related duties they perform during these hours involve organising interviews and scheduling program materials. Most of the interviewees are people within the organisation. DAFF programs require presenters to meet with section heads before the program goes to air. The newspaper articles involve researching and taking notes at meetings.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

The NGO officers involved in media production do not require media qualifications or experience to work in this area. Some have undertaken short-course training. For example, a NISANOC officer attended a Sports Media workshop in Vanuatu; and the NIOFA Coordinator attended a two-week regional radio training workshop at the Institute for Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture (IRETA) in Suva, Fiji, on interview techniques and news gathering.

The BCN, in conjunction with the SPC in Fiji, held an in-country radio training workshop on radio magazine production in 2002. Most of the participants who attended this workshop did not continue in this role or have since left the island. NGOs have not received any training in broadcast panel operation in order to fully present their programs. BCN staff take care of this.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

NGO media training priorities are:

NIOFA	How to structure radio programs for broadcast and to archive programs. Training in writing for the print media and the internet.
NISANOC	Writing news reports, using digital cameras and processing pictures for print.

NCC Formal training in radio presentation, how to structure radio programs and prerecord programs for radio. The ability to train its own members to use the equipment — digital recorder, panel (mixer) and editing equipment.

4.7 **NGO media production equipment**

The majority of these organisations do not have a physical office and the officers use facilities at their workplaces to produce media content (mostly program outlines, organising interviewees and writing articles).

4.8 **NGO media processes**

There is often a reciprocal arrangement for NGOs to provide news to the media and the media to allocate space free of charge but there is no policy in place. All community groups using Radio Sunshine are officially required to pay a NZ\$50 fee for a one-hour spot. However, as noted earlier, the BCN often removes this as an incentive to encourage ongoing production from organisations. NIOFA does pay the NZ\$50 fee because of its association with a government department (DAFF).

NISANOC provides news for the *Niue Star*, which is published free of charge. *Niue Star* views this as beneficial to both parties.

Most of the NGOs said they would like regular reviews of their programs to ensure that they are improving.

4.9 **NGO community radio or television**

Radio Sunshine largely operates as a community station, and there is not enough demand for a separate community radio station. Most of the NGOs have considered the possibility of producing a newsletter but lack of funding and other resources are the most common reasons for not pursuing this.

4.10 **Funding for media content**

Only NIOFA has received donor funding, for media content from the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) project.

4.11 **Observations on civil society media capacity**

The critical issues for NGOs in Niue relate to the lack of resources — funding, officers and equipment. Many of the NGOs are 'staffed' by volunteers, and do not have offices with resources to produce media content. Thus the reliance on live-to-air radio. While those listed here are reportedly keen to contribute to the media, it is very difficult for them to do this on a sustainable basis for these reasons. NIUANGO is also currently not in a position to act as an umbrella resource organisation that provides access to media training and equipment.

¹ All currency referred to in this chapter is in NZ dollars. NZ\$1.00 equals approximately AU\$0.93.

² In June 2005, after the survey period of mid to late 2004, the editor of the Niue News website moved to New Zealand and announced the closure of the site because the costs of gathering news off island would be too high.

³ Anonymous letters to the editor, along with signed letters to the editor critical of government, have caused government concern in other Pacific Island countries as well.

⁴ See <http://www.niuegov.com/niuefoou2004.htm>.

PALAU

BACKGROUND

The Republic of Palau is in the westernmost part of Micronesia. It consists of approximately three hundred islands, nine of which are inhabited. Palau is one of the largest islands in Micronesia, second only to Guam. The population is 20,016, and an estimated 70 per cent live in the capital state, Koror.

In 1947 Palau became part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands established by the United Nations and administered by the United States. American rule was marked by increased dependency but little economic development. Democratic institutions and an American style of education were introduced.¹ The US had hoped to include Palau in the rest of Micronesia as a single political entity. In 1978, however, Palauans voted to retain a separate identity and not become a part of the Federated States of Micronesia. In 1980 Palau adopted its own Constitution, and the first President, Haruo Remeliik, took office in 1981. Koror was named the provisional capital, though the Constitution requires that it eventually be moved to Babeldaob in Melekeok State.

On 1 October 1994 Palau officially became an independent nation in free association with the US, ending 47 years as a Trust Territory. That same year it was admitted to the United Nations.

Palau consists of a national government and a federation of 16 state governments.² It follows a democratic system similar to the US, with an executive, legislative and judicial branch, and a President and Vice President. The national legislature is made up of nine senators and sixteen delegates. The Senators are elected from across the nation and each delegate represents one of the 16 states. These two houses make up the Olbiil Era Kelula (OEK). Each state also elects its own governor and legislature, and has limited legislative and executive powers. There is also a Council of Chiefs that consists of the highest ranking chiefs from each of the 16 states. The Council acts as an advisory body to the President on matters of custom and traditional laws and their relationship to the Constitution and the laws of Palau.³

The economy consists primarily of tourism, subsistence agriculture and fishing. The government is the major employer of the workforce, relying heavily on financial assistance from the US.⁴

Palauan is spoken at home and in casual situations, while English is more common in business and government. Schools teach both languages, so most Palauans are bilingual from an early age. The South-West Islanders speak some Sonsorolese and Tobian languages.

The survey in Palau was conducted from August to October 2004.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Division of Transportation and Communication is responsible for allocating broadcast licences and frequencies. The *Communication Act* (RPPL No. 5-43) was signed into law in 1997 and amended in 2000. The legislation deals with the regulation of radio frequencies and channels

within the Republic of Palau and allows the Division to charge licence fees, but there appears to be no fee schedule. Subchapter 4 of the Act, states:

Section 131. License required; maintenance of records of broadcast.

- (a) *No person may operate an AM or FM radio station or television station in the Republic of Palau unless the person first obtains the appropriate license from the Division.*
- (b) *All AM or FM radio or television broadcasts the substance of which is not pre-recorded shall be recorded in full on audio or video tape, as the case may be, at the time of broadcast, and recordings of broadcasts shall be retained by the licensee and made available to the Division for inspection for not less than 15 days after the date of broadcast. The licensee shall maintain copies of pre-recorded broadcasts for inspection by the Division for not less than 15 days after the date of broadcast, unless otherwise authorized or required by the Division. The recording must be clear and decipherable. No person may in any way edit or otherwise alter any recording. Any person who violates this subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not less than US\$500 [approximately AU\$630]⁵ and not more than US\$1,000. A person convicted of a second violation shall be fined not less than US\$1,000 and not more than US\$10,000, shall be imprisoned not more than six months, or both. A person convicted of a third or subsequent violation shall be fined not less than US\$10,000, shall be imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, and shall have his or her license suspended by the Division for a period of not less than six months or not more than one year.*
- (c) *Any person aggrieved by any AM or FM radio or television broadcast may frequent that Division to obtain a tape of the recording from the broadcast for that person's review. The Division shall liberally grant these requests when it appears that the person shall have the right to bring an action in the Supreme Court to enforce this section.*
- (d) *Each license shall maintain a log book of all broadcasts. The log book shall record all subjects discussed, guests interviewed and programs broadcast on that radio station. Each day's entry shall be maintained for a period of at least two years after the entry is made. The log books shall be available for inspection by the Division.*

Section 132. Application for license. All applications for the issuance, modification, or renewal of an AM or FM radio station or television station license shall be written and shall set forth the following:

- (a) *such facts as the Division by regulation may prescribe as to citizenship, character, and financial, technical and other qualifications of the applicant to operate the station;*
- (b) *the ownership and proposed location of the AM or FM radio or television station;*
- (c) *the frequency or frequencies and transmission power to be used;*
- (d) *the hours of the day or other periods of time during which the station is to be used;*
- (e) *the purposes for which the station is to be used;*
- (f) *a waiver of any claim to the use of any particular frequency as against the regulatory power of the Republic because of the previous use of the frequency, whether by license or otherwise; and*
- (g) *such other information as the Division may require from the applicant or licensee.*

The application shall be signed by the applicant or licensee. The applicant or licensee shall report to the Division all changes to information submitted as part of the license application occurring after submission of the application and before the expiration date entered on the face of the license.

Section 151 states that the Division has no power of censorship over radio communications or signals transmitted by any radio station, and no regulation or condition may be promulgated or fixed by the Division that interferes with the right of free speech by radio communication. However, a radio licence can be suspended for up to one year if the station 'has transmitted obscene words or language.'

Newspapers must obtain a business licence to operate.

The Palau National Communications Corporation (PNCC) oversees telecommunications. The PNCC is a public corporation and a semi-government agency.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

Article IV of the Palau Constitution on Fundamental Rights, section 2, explicitly guarantees freedom of the press. It states:

The government shall take no action to deny or impair the freedom of expression or press. No bona fide reporter may be required by the government to divulge or be jailed for refusal to divulge information obtained in the course of investigation.

There is no guarantee or right in the Constitution to information, and no separate FOI legislation.

1.3 Media regulation

As noted above, there is no media regulation as such. The *Communication Act* deals with the allocation of licences and frequencies only. Radio stations are required to keep a record of all their radio broadcasts for 15 days in case there is a complaint, but there is no regulatory body in the Division of Transportation and Communication. The division is also not responsible for regulating television content on the cable television service.

One foreign-owned paper (the *Palau Horizon*) had to obtain a foreign investment approval certificate.

1.4 Defamation

Libel law in Palau is described as loose and rarely enforced, and it has reportedly had no impact on the news content.⁶ Libel is defined as:

Every person who shall unlawfully, wilfully, and maliciously, speak, write, print, or in any other manner publish material which exposes another person to hatred, contempt, or ridicule, shall be guilty of criminal libel, and upon conviction thereof shall be imprisoned for a period of not more than six months, or shall be fined not more than US\$50.00, or both. (Chapter 20, Palau National Code 1986)

Truth is a defence.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are no local content or community service requirements in the legislation, but media organisations have made their own policies in these areas. The Chief of the Division of Transportation and Communication said the government intends to explore local content provisions for the cable television service as part of broader regulatory development.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

There are two government radio stations, T8AA AM and Eco Paradise FM, which are operated by the Bureau of Domestic Affairs (BDA). The radio staff are government employees. The government appoints the station manager and reasons for this are not based on recommendations known to the public. The station manager reports to the BDA Director.

1.7 Government funding for media

The BDA has a yearly budget of US\$333,000. Of this US\$140,000 is used to run the radio stations. Neither station needs to raise additional funds.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

There is one privately owned radio station and two government-run radio stations that produce local news, and there are three newspapers in Palau.

Radio

- T8AA AM and Eco Paradise FM are both government radio stations run by the BDA. They broadcast the same program content on AM and FM channels in Palauan and English.
- WWFM (Diaz station) is the only private radio station producing local news. It is owned by Alfonso Diaz. It broadcasts in Palauan and English.
- Two religious groups also operate private radio stations, the High Adventure Ministries and the Seventh Day Adventists.

Newspapers

- The *Palau Horizon* newspaper is published every Tuesday and Friday in English. It is privately owned by Island's Horizon Corporation. It started as a weekly in August 1998 and began publishing twice a week in April 2003. The paper prints 1300 copies for the Tuesday edition and 1500 for the Friday edition.
- *Tia Belau* is a privately owned newspaper that started as a weekly in 1974 then stopped for a few years. In 1992 it started printing weekly, and now is published every Friday in English. MYU Publications owns the paper. It also launched a new weekly paper, *Meluich*, in June 2004. It is published every Monday in Palauan. *Tia Belau* prints 1300 for its weekly edition, while *Meluich* prints 300 copies.

Television

- Island Cable Television (ICTV) is owned and operated by the PNCC. There is a local access station, but no local news is produced.

2.2 Radio and television program formats

The BDA stations, T8AA and Eco Paradise focus on news, announcements, music, Japanese music and Palauan folk stories, and broadcast the Palau National Congress sessions. WWFM broadcasts news, talk shows and a mix of music.

ICTV programs are dominated by US channels such as the Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, the Discovery Channel, Animal Planet and CNN, and also carry a Japanese channel. The local access channel does broadcast the President's weekly press conference and sessions from the National Congress. The local station does not produce its own programs. It provides an outlet for locally made video content.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The *Palau Horizon* covers what is taking place in the community and in the government. The Publisher said it serves community interests and what the government can do for the community.

Tia Belau focuses on local news and community news, while *Meluich* deals more with social activities, customary matters and the grassroots community.

All three newspapers are well regarded for their coverage of political issues and reports on corruption.⁷

2.4 Target audience and distribution

The BDA radio stations broadcast to all Palauans. T8AA's AM signal covers Babeldaob, Peleliu, Angaur and the South-West islands, the outer lying states. Eco Paradise's FM signal reaches Koror and Airai states only.

WWFM's audience is the local community, foreigners in Palau, grassroots-level audiences, 21 to 35 years old and people in remote areas. The Station Manager said the station covers much of Palau except the South-West Islands of Sonsorol and Hatohebei.

The *Palau Horizon* aims its content at all generations and all of Palau. It does not cater to a specific community. Seventy per cent of the paper focuses on news from Palau, while the rest is from Guam, Saipan, Pohnpei and PINA Nius Online. The *Palau Horizon* is only distributed in Koror, Airai and Melekeok. It is also sold overseas in Yap, Guam and Saipan.

Tia Belau targets the younger generation from 15 to 40 years. The paper is distributed mainly to Koror, Airai and a few copies in Melekeok State, Ngchesar State and Ngeremlengui. It also has subscribers in Yap, Guam, Saipan, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Marshall Islands, Oregon and Hawaii.

Meluich targets Palauans who do not understand English, the older generation, and caters more to the locals than foreigners.

2.5 Community and sponsorship issues

None of the media organisations have conducted an audience survey. Lack of expertise and human resources were cited as the reason for this. The media do receive informal feedback.

The Station Manager of the BDA stations said people 'want to listen to the day to day operations of the government. But since we work for the government our stories are on the safe side'.

The Station Manager at WWFM commented that he has learned that ‘most of the people in the community like to listen to controversial issues, especially those that involved government operations.’

According to the Publisher of the *Palau Horizon*, ‘Most of the feedbacks are from people’s comment through talking to the publisher or reporters but it has not been formally noted down.’

Tia Belau/Meluich’s Publisher said, ‘We have learned that people like to make negative comments about the government. They like questioning the behaviour of the government.’

2.6 NGO and government access

The BDA stations only charge the private sector for access. Government departments and NGOs do not have to pay to broadcast programs, press releases or public service announcements.

The private radio station, WWFM, charges US\$5.00 a page for announcements but gives free airtime to NGOs that are not financially strong, and to the Tobacco Control Program, Coral Reef and church organisations. The station broadcasts the President’s weekly press conference at no cost as a public service.

NGOs and government departments do not pay to have articles published in the newspapers if the editors accept them as news.

2.7 Journalism resources

The BDA stations employ three journalists including the News Director. The journalists are graduates of two-year college degree courses but, according to the Director of the BDA:

Our problem [is that] we do not get the right people for the radio station. And the hiring was not our choice; instead they are politically hired, meaning they don’t go through the process. [Or] they were hired because they were close to the President.

The journalists do not have specialist qualifications in a good governance area and there are no investigative journalists.

The Station Manager/journalist at WWFM has no journalism education but has experience running a military base radio station.

The newspapers mainly employ non-Palauan journalists, as there are very few qualified Palauan journalists. Journalism is not seen as a major career option, and this is a problem in other Micronesian countries too. According to the SANA researcher, there is also a perception that foreign journalists are less biased, with fewer political or social ties, and that as they are experienced journalists they know their responsibilities well.

Palau Horizon has three journalists; *Tia Belau* and *Meluich* each have two journalists and one editor; the government radio stations have three journalists; and WWFM has one, the Station Manager.

Palau Horizon recruits graduates from four-year journalism degree programs. It currently has two journalists who have degrees in journalism from the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines.

Tia Belau’s recruits must have completed a two-year college degree but do not have to be journalism graduates. Currently one *Tia Belau* journalist has a degree in engineering from San Carlos University in the Philippines, one is a journalism graduate from the University of Santo Tomas and the third journalist graduated in Mass Communications in the Philippines. *Meluich* has one journalist with a two-year college degree and another part-time journalist studying at the Palau Community College.

The pay scale is as follows: government radio US\$10,000 a year (senior reporter, which is the current level of the station’s journalists); *Palau Horizon* US\$8400 annually; *Tia Belau* and *Meluich* US\$6000 annually.

Equipment resources

BDA radio has computer and internet access, two audio studios, tape recorders and telephone access to rural and outer islands.

WWFM has computer and internet access, recording studios, hand-held tape recorders for interviews and telephone access through cellular phone services to rural and outer island areas. The Station Manager said it needs more state-of-the-art radio equipment, a tower and a new

antenna, and a back-up generator or uninterruptible power supplies, so that when there are power outages the station does not go off-air.

The *Palau Horizon* provides whatever the journalists need to accomplish news gathering — computer, tape recorder, camera, internet access and telephone access to outer islands. Equipment is considered adequate.

Tia Belau/Meluich journalists have access to computers, tape recorder, digital camera, telephones and limited internet that journalists use for email. The Publisher said there is a need for new tape recorders and digital cameras.

Internet access is limited and some of the media did not include an email contact address with their details for the survey.

Journalists in the private media stay for two to three years and leave for family reasons and for a change of environment. The journalists at the government radio stations can remain employed until retirement.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

All the radio stations broadcast news, but none produce current affairs. The BDA radio stations broadcast up to eight news bulletins a day, but some of these feature world news. WWFM broadcasts eight to ten news bulletins a day.

2.9 Average number of daily local news stories

BDA radio only produces a maximum of 4 stories daily (broadcast on both stations).

WWFM produces 5 to 10 local stories daily.

Palau Horizon averages 10 to 15 stories every publication, and this is a combination of local stories and press releases.

Tia Belau publishes about 22 stories a week; *Meluich* 12 stories a week.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

BDA radio listed government operation, government policies and legislation, and how this affects people's lives, status of government projects, such as road projects, and other things that affect everyday life. 'We are a government-run radio station if there are news stories which are controversial the leadership or government has to decide whether reporting about it can be misconstrued by the audience.' (News Director)

As noted, WWFM's Station Manager said Palauans like controversial issues, news about the operation of the government, and that health and education are also important.

Palau Horizon's news governance priorities are day-to-day functions of the government, what affects the government and the policies government may create which will affect the general public and environment, and events in education, health, regulations, and development of interest to the community.

Tia Belau concentrates on economic and political matters and *Meluich* on social matters.

None of the media reported receiving donor assistance to produce governance content. The government radio station Eco Paradise has received funds from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for equipment.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

BDA radio: Attendance at press conferences or special events, and monitoring National Congress sessions and reporting on the resolutions approved.

WWFM: Mostly interviews with sources, attendance at press conferences and special events. WWFM does not use regional or overseas news services.

Palau Horizon: 'Mostly interviews with sources, attendance of press conferences; we emphasise and maintain that our journalists go to their sources of information, talk to the people involved. We emphasise a more aggressive information gathering process.' (Publisher)

Regional and overseas news services accessed are: AP, Reuters and PINA Nius Online. The *Palau Horizon* does not have its own website but its sister publication, *Marianas Variety* in Saipan, publishes at least 10 stories a week from the *Palau Horizon* online.

Tia Belau/Meluich: Interview sources, both telephone and personal interviews, and attendance at press conferences and use of press releases. The Publisher said the newspapers do not use any regional or overseas news service because the focus is on local news.

2.12 Media access to government content

The media cannot access government speeches, briefings and policies via the internet as these are not available online and the media's internet access is limited.

The President appears to have a good working relationship with the media, but a senior journalist said that while 'most government agencies are transparent, most of them do not talk or show documents, especially if it would put them in a negative light'.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

The News Director of 8AAA/Eco Paradise said the amount of news was determined by the stories available or events for the day.

For WWFM, the main constraint is having one available journalist.

Palau Horizon's Publisher said the paper aims for 60 per cent stories and 40 per cent advertising. Equipment is not a problem but the paper is one journalist short, and is waiting on a third journalist. This is affecting the number of stories covered.

Tia Belau/Meluich cited journalism resources and the amount of advertising.

2.14 Threats to funding

The media reported no instances of government or corporate funds being withdrawn due to concerns about editorial content.

2.15 Industry training

None of the media provide structured in-house training for recruits.

It is interesting to note that the newspapers hire foreign journalists. They rarely hire local journalists. The Publisher of *Palau Horizon* said that this is because there are no available local journalists trained and educated in journalism.

The Publisher of *Tia Belau* and *Meluich* said that very few locals are interested in taking journalism as a course. He added that it is very difficult for young Palauans to write stories about their uncles and traditional chiefs because they could come under pressure.

In 2003-04 the *Palau Horizon* assisted with the establishment of a journalism program at the Palau High School and provided one its journalists to conduct this as a community service. The aim is to generate interest in journalism as a career in Palau. The classes are offered to Grades 11 and 12 and run for one hour every day for the whole school year. Course content includes news writing, feature writing, taking photographs, and how to conduct interviews. The Publisher of the *Palau Horizon* said:

We want to try to get students interested in what's happening in their community. At the same time the students would learn to write English well. Hopefully by doing that they can develop and pursue careers in journalism and get interested in reporting.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

There is no national media association or media council, and no local industry-developed code of ethics for journalists. The *Palau Horizon* and WWFM follow an international code of ethics, which can be found at: http://www.spj.org/ethics_code.asp.

Tia Belau/Meluich has a code of ethics based on one in the Philippines. The government radio stations, 8AAA and Eco Paradise do not have a code of ethics for journalists, but there is a code of ethics for government officers.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

There is no industry regulatory body in Palau.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

The media industry in Palau is small, but within this there is a level of diversity, with government radio, private radio and independent newspapers. Like the Republic of the Marshall Islands and

FSM, Palau has a US model of cable television that provides a local access station, but has no local production capacity. Unlike the Marshall Islands and FSM, Palau does not have active media NGOs capable of producing local video programming for broadcast.

One of the challenges facing journalism in Palau is the lack of trained Palauan journalists and the lack of interest in journalism as a career. The *Palau Horizon's* initiative to teach journalism to senior school students is one valuable way of addressing this. Another would be to explore the feasibility of the Palau Community College developing a media and journalism program (post-school, two-year diploma).

There was no discussion in the survey about the government radio stations, 8AAA and Eco Paradise, being corporatised and taking on a role more independent of government. While they are fully funded by government and part of a government department, it is not possible for them to offer alternative and/or critical opinions of government. Both these stations are also relatively well resourced, and have three journalists. However, their news production output is very limited. The operations of both stations and the role of the journalists would benefit from a review as there currently appears to be no incentive for journalists to perform better. As part of this review, some consideration could also be given to implementing new programs such as a current affairs and talkback.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

There are about 12 government ministries in Palau and most of them do not make regular use of the media. They rely on the journalists from private media to schedule interviews and make contacts with them for stories. All ministries issue press releases but on an irregular basis, when there are new developments in their departments. No government departments produce radio programs. They send public announcements or press releases to the media to be read over the radio.

The Office of the President, the Ministry of Justice and the Tobacco Control Program have the most effective media presence. The rest of the ministries lack staff, media experience and an understanding of the media's role in the community, and this prevents them from producing media content.

Human resources

There is one officer, the Presidential Chief of Staff who is in charge of the President's media relations. The Minister for Justice is the main officer producing media for this ministry.

The Tobacco Control Program in the Ministry of Health is a federal program funded by the Centre for Disease Control. It has three staff, one focusing on the media campaign (marketing staff) and the others sharing ideas with her.

3.2 Government media processes

The Presidential Chief of Staff in the Office of the President only handles media relations, liaising with the media on coverage and providing content. Press releases are written by the presidential legal counsels. The legal counsels also write the President's speeches.

The Office of the President conducts a weekly one-hour press conference broadcast on the local access television station and WWFM, and makes regular contact with the media. The press conference is in Palauan. However, as the local newspaper organisations employ non-Palauan journalists, the President summarises the issues he discusses in English, as well enabling non-Palauan journalists to ask questions in English.

The daily sessions of the National Congress are transcribed in Palauan and translated into English. As noted earlier, National Congress sessions are also broadcast on the government radio stations and the local television access station, ICTV.

3.3 Government department media content

The Ministry of Justice produces press releases two to four times a month and gives radio interviews. It also assists in the production of videos for the law enforcement graduates: one or two video programs are produced annually. The ministry does not write the scripts as this is done

by a volunteer who also does the video recording. The Minister of Justice also oversees other media content produced by the ministry:

Police directors, chiefs, deputy chiefs, deputy director can give out various information for the media. I sometimes direct them to provide information. I have an overall editorial discretion on what should be said to the media. Reporters could go to individual chiefs, me or the director and we give them interviews ... My role is to make sure that we don't disclose inappropriate but appropriate information. Press releases are approved through me and any person who wants to come to me I will decide what to disclose. (Justice Minister)

The Tobacco Control Program has been running a media campaign for three years. The campaign includes advertisements, press releases, radio announcements, brochures and billboards.

Government department newspaper content is in English and the government radio announcements and advertisements are in Palauan.

3.4 Media governance priorities

The government funds the radio stations so it can reach the public and broadcast information on government operations, laws and policies. The stations also update the public on the status of government projects, and broadcast the Palau National Congress sessions live.

The Justice Ministry focuses on criminal justice and the Tobacco Control Program's priority is health and tobacco-related illnesses.

3.5 Target audiences

The Office of the President targets the whole country. Justice targets the entire country, government and non-government agencies and tourists. The Tobacco Control Program targets adults in general, parents specifically, policy makers and restaurant owners. The program has not evaluated the effectiveness of its media content as it lacks the personnel to do this.

So far we get positive feedback from the community. We are everywhere. They know that tobacco control is an issue, for example during the women's conference it was observed that the community know more about tobacco control but not so much on alcohol control. (Program Coordinator)

3.6 Qualifications and training

The Presidential Chief of Staff is not a qualified media officer, and only some of his duties relate to public relations. As noted earlier, a government lawyer writes the press releases and the Chief of Staff disseminates them.

The Ministry of Justice does not have a media officer. The Justice Minister writes most of the press releases. The Minister has had on-the-job training at the US Department of Justice in writing press releases.

The Tobacco Control Program does not have a specialist media officer. To work in this area, the officer must be computer literate, familiar with graphic design programs, have a four-year degree in any area, be able to write well, and do research and sum this up in an article. They must be fluent in both English and Palauan.

3.7 Equipment

The Presidential Chief of Staff has access to a computer, the internet, telephone and a camera.

The Tobacco Control Program has access to computer, the internet, camera and DVD player.

The Ministry of Justice has computers, internet access, radio and television production equipment, and a studio. However, it cannot edit audio or video on computer, and has no hand-held tape recorders for interviews. It would like video cameras and the ability to tape the activities of the patrol division for public education.

3.8 Government-media relationships

As noted earlier, the President is in regular contact with the media, but few other ministries are. The lack of government information and policies on the internet and limited email access further limit the flow of information between the two sectors. The Presidential Chief of Staff believes that the BDA could play a more active role on behalf of the other ministries. Prior to his appointment, the BDA used to handle media relations for the President. Currently it produces no media content. The Chief of Staff said:

As for the Bureau of Domestic Affairs they could be more proactive in getting and disseminating the news and getting it out in a timely manner, they can certainly improve in that area. There are a lot of information floating there, the bureau can cover activities of the ministries. The bureau should be directed to talk to the ministries and write articles. There is a need for them to find someone who would assist them in the area of writing press releases and disseminating them to the media organisations.

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

- The majority of government departments do not see the need to publicise their programs unless they are very important. To most departments, producing media is the responsibility of newspaper or radio journalists. Some of the officials and the departments also do not value media deadline pressures, and 'believe that there's always a next time to publicise an event or program'. Palau's lack of trained media professionals also means that there are few qualified people who could work for the government in media relations.
- Media awareness training for ministers and senior bureaucrats involving representatives from each of the news-producing media organisations could assist to improve the working relationship between the two sectors.
- The BDA radio stations are also a resource for government, but the ministries need a better appreciation of how they can disseminate information more effectively via these stations using a range of program formats. Government departments are currently making very limited use of these media.
- The independent newspapers are interested in receiving stories and features from government that fit their news policies, and this is another area that could be developed.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

There are about nine NGOs in Palau: the Palau Conservation Society (PCS); Palau International Coral Reef Centre (PICRC); the Nature Conservancy; Belau Tourism Association; Palau Chamber of Commerce; Palau Parents' Network; Palau Red Cross Society and Rotary Club; and the Palau Community Action Agency.

The PCS and the PICRC are the only two NGOs that make regular use of the media. They issue press releases and contact the media organisations about events and for photo opportunities. The other NGOs may call the media for photo opportunities when making or receiving donations from private, government and individual agencies.

Lack of staff and resources are the main issues that affect these organisations' capacity to produce media content. There is also the belief that in a small nation like Palau, there is not the need to make the same level of use of the media as there is in large countries, as information spreads quickly through non-media channels.

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

The PICRC is a non-profit organisation that conducts research on knowledge and conservation of the coral reef system. The centre produces media content (press releases) on the visits to its Palau Aquarium at least once a week. These are produced in English for newspaper articles and Palauan for radio announcements. The PICRC's priorities are research on the coral reef system and aquarium visits. The press releases for the newspapers are in English, and the announcements for radio are in Palauan.

The PCS produces press releases and radio announcements that are read on air. It does not write newspaper articles. It used to have a column on conservation every week in the *Palau Horizon* and *Tia Belau*. This stopped in July 2004 but there are plans to revive it. The PCS also publishes a newsletter called *Ngerel A Biib* quarterly and 1000 copies are printed. PCS media content is in English and Palauan.

The PCS content focuses on conservation and environmental issues, and it uses the media to highlight individuals working in conservation and activities that have played a big part in conservation in Palau.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

The PICRC's target audiences for information about the aquarium are the local population and local operators, and for its research information, government institutions, research groups and traditional leaders. It monitors the publication of articles in the newspapers, and checks the government offices to see if they have copies of the newspapers. It also gets positive feedback from the community.

The PCS target audience depends on the issue. The Development Officer said, 'If it's about land use then we target decision makers; if it is about conservation areas we target government officials and senior members of the community; and for general environmental awareness we target schools and students.' Like the PICRC, PCS has no formal mechanism to gauge audience feedback on its media strategies.

4.4 NGO media capacity

The PICRC does not have full-time media officers. Three of the staff produce media content as part of their other duties. They spend about five hours a month on this work. This involves writing press releases, taking photographs and organising media interviews with the centre's officers.

PCS has four people involved in the media production as part of their other duties. One is an educator who writes the newspaper articles and fact sheets and prepares school materials. Another is a senior officer who prepares the annual report and brochures that target the more educated audiences. The third person is an artist who does layout and visuals for advertisements, brochures and newsletters. The fourth person is a development officer who ensures that the press releases go out and materials for fundraising activities are developed, along with other duties.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

The PICRC requires officers who can speak, write and read English very well. They also require a knowledge of PICRC's organisational mission; its day-to-day operations and how to use the digital camera. The PICRC officers have not done any media training.

PCS officers need good speaking and writing skills, computer skills and artistic skills. None of the four officers have received any media training.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The Acting Executive Director, PICRC, said, 'We still need a lot of improvements in creative writing, presentation of ideas and facts, and a need for technical skills in using different computer programs.'

PCS listed its priorities as further training in video and radio production, print media and uses of colours and visuals.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

The PICRC officers have access to computers, the internet, telephone access to rural and outer islands, and tape recorders. The Development Officer said the equipment is not adequate, as the centre needs a video camera and a better digital camera to record visits to the aquarium and to tape centre events.

The PCS officers have computers, internet access but no television or radio equipment or studios and no telephone access to rural and outer islands. The Development Officer described this as adequate, 'because we can contract out to local experts, for example, video production for the conservation programs'.

4.8 NGO media processes

The PICRC pays for the production of brochures, posters, its website and advertisements. It does not have to pay to publish press releases and broadcast announcements on radio.

The PCS funds productions it contracts out, advertisements in local newspapers, printing costs for brochures and newsletters, and for maintenance of the website. Press releases and radio announcements are published and/or read on radio at no cost.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

Neither of the NGOs was interested in this option.

4.10 Funding for media content

The PICRC has not received any funding to produce media content. JICA funded the production of a booklet on the centre's annual report.

The PCS has received no donor funding for media content. Its funding comes mostly from US federal grants, local and corporate sponsors and membership fees.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

- The NGO sector in Palau is very small, but it could make more extensive use of the media. The PCS Development Officer felt that NGOs need more media training. 'We should keep a very close relationship with the media. We contact them for information and we should submit our articles during their deadlines.'
- Media awareness training, similar to the training suggested for government, would increase NGO understanding of the media and its potential as a vehicle for NGO information. Experienced media NGOs like Mission Pacific (Marshall Islands) and MicSem (FSM) could provide assistance with the training and advice on resourcing media production.
- Networking and sharing information and media production resources between the nine NGOs would also strengthen their overall capacity and effectiveness.

¹ On 18 July 1947 the US agreed to administer the former Japanese-mandated Caroline, Marshall and Mariana islands under a trusteeship agreement with the United Nations. The Trust Territory so formed was administered by the US Navy until 1951, when responsibility for all the islands comprising the Trust Territory except Tinian and Saipan in the Northern Marianas was transferred to the Department of the Interior. See also http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761579873/Republic_of_Palau.html

² Aimeliik, Airai, Angaur, Hatohobei, Kayangel, Koror, Melekeok, Ngaraard, Ngarchelong, Ngardmau, Ngatpang, Ngchesar, Ngeremlengui, Ngiwal, Peleliu, and Sonsorol.

³ Source: <http://www.olekoi.com/Belau.htm>

⁴ Source: http://open-site.org/Regional/Oceania/Palau/Business_and_Economy/

⁵ All currency in this chapter is in US dollars. US\$1.00 equals approximately AU\$1.25.

⁶ See also National Integrity Systems Transparency International, *Country Study Report, Republic Palau Report 2004*, p. 40.

⁷ National Integrity Systems Transparency International, *Country Study Report, Republic Palau Report 2004*, p. 17.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

BACKGROUND

Papua New Guinea (PNG) includes the mainland and six hundred other islands, and has a population of approximately 5.3 million. Most of the people are Melanesian, but some are Micronesian or Polynesian. There are more than seven hundred language groups, and English, Tok Pisin and Motu are major languages. PNG has been described as the most culturally and linguistically diverse country in the world. It also has one of the most challenging physical environments, with extensive mountainous and heavily forested areas.

Papua New Guinean society ranges from village-based communities living on subsistence and small cash-crop agriculture to communities living in the main cities of Port Moresby (the capital), Lae, Madang, Wewak, Goroka, Mount Hagen and Rabaul. It is estimated that 85 per cent of the population make their living from farming, and 15 per cent of the population live in urban areas. The population growth rate is approximately 2.5 per cent per annum.¹

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) reports that 37 per cent of Papua New Guineans live in poverty and, in relation to other Pacific Island countries, rates PNG last on the human development index and poverty index. The ADB notes:

*The disappointing human development reflects low life expectancy, poor adult literacy, and low enrollment at all levels of education. Maternal, infant, and child health are very poor and worsening in the most disadvantaged provinces. Access to education and health services is very limited, especially for the rural population. Gender inequalities are significant, with women's life expectancy, income, and educational achievements universally lower than men's. The Government and the people face a complex development task, which will require competent, motivated management and a sustained long-term coordinated effort at all levels of the society.*²

PNG is a constitutional monarchy. The head of state is HM Queen Elizabeth II, represented in PNG by a governor-general. The governor-general is elected directly by Parliament and performs mainly ceremonial functions. There are three levels of government, national, provincial and local. The national Parliament is a 109-member unicameral legislature elected for five-year terms by universal suffrage. The prime minister is elected by Parliament and can be dismissed by the governor-general on the proposal of Parliament.

Members of Parliament are elected from the 19 provinces and the National Capital District (NCD) of Port Moresby. Parliament is made up of 89 single-member electorates and 20 regional electorates. The regional electorates coincide with PNG's provinces and the NCD; members from these electorates also serve as the provincial governors. Each province is responsible for its own provincial assembly and administration. Provincial governments are given grants by the national government to operate such functions as capital works and maintenance, health, education, agriculture and business development in their respective provinces.

The Supreme Court, National Court, and local and village courts form the independent justice system.

The current Parliament is the seventh since independence from Australia in 1975. No prime minister has served a full five-year term. The first national elections in 1977 confirmed Michael Somare

as Prime Minister at the head of a coalition led by the Pangu party. His government lost a no-confidence motion in 1980 and was replaced by a new Cabinet headed by Julius Chan. The seventh national Parliament was elected in June 2002 and, in August 2002, Sir Michael Somare, leader of the National Alliance Party, became Prime Minister for a third time.

PNG politics is described as highly competitive and fluid. Up to, and including, the June 2002 general election, members of Parliament were elected on a first-past-the-post basis and they could win with less than 15 per cent of the vote. Historically, there has been a high turnover of parliamentarians at general elections. In 2002 around 80 per cent of sitting members lost their seats. While there are 18 parties represented in Parliament, party allegiances tend not to be strong. Parties have traditionally revolved around personalities rather than a strong party ideology. No single party has yet won enough seats to form a government in its own right.³

In 1997 the PNG government and officials of Bougainville established a Truce Monitoring Group, following a lengthy secessionist conflict that commenced prior to independence in 1975 and escalated in 1988 with the establishment of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). On 30 August 2001 the Bougainville Peace Agreement was signed at Arawa, Bougainville. It provides a framework for disarmament and an autonomous Bougainville government.⁴

The survey period in PNG was August 2004 to December 2004, with some follow-up research completed in the early months of 2005.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Department of State Enterprises and Information (DSEI) was established in May 2004. Its two main tasks are to oversee the development of the privatisation policy and the information and communication policy. This involves strengthening public awareness about government policies and activities through information in its newly launched newspaper, *Gavamani Sivarai*. The former Office of Information and Communication has been absorbed into the new department.

The DSEI is responsible for:

- The National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC); and
- All matters related to the Papua New Guinea Radiocommunication and Telecommunication Technical Authority (PANGTEL).

The Prime Minister's office was responsible for media regulation (except the *Defamation Act 1962* and the *Classification of Publications (Censorship) Act 1989* until the DSEI was established.

PANGTEL manages the *Radio Spectrum Act 1996*, which covers the licensing and regulation of radio and television broadcasting. The Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC) and PANGTEL are responsible for the regulation of the *Telecommunications Act 1996* and *Telecommunications Industry Act 2002*.

In 1994 the PNG government developed a National Policy on Information and Communication (NPIC) but this is now outdated and a new policy is required that will take into account changes in modern technology, while striking a balance between the government's expectations, the private sector's commercial interests and the public's right to information and communication. In 2004 Cabinet directed the Department to review the NPIC to reflect advances in technology. This review has yet to take place.

The current legislation relating to the operation and licensing of media is:

- *Printers and Newspapers Act 1956*
- *Defamation Act 1962*
- *Broadcasting Corporation Act 1973*
- *Television (Prohibition and Control) Act 1980*
- *Classification of Publications (Censorship) Act 1989*
- *Telecommunications Act 1996*
- *Radio Spectrum Act 1996 and Radio Spectrum Regulation 1997*

- *Telecommunications Industry Act 2002*

Other legislation that affects the media industry is:

- *Commercial Advertising (Protection of the Public) Act 1976*: A law to protect the public from untrue, inaccurate or misleading commercial advertisements. The media carry advertising and they must know the legal requirements under this law.
- *Commercial Advertising (Protection of Local Industry) Act 1985*: This law is to ensure the development of a PNG advertising industry; to increase the employment opportunities for PNG citizens in advertising production; to reduce outgoing foreign exchange revenues for advertising purposes; to foster a truly PNG advertising identity; and for related purposes. The media carry both locally produced advertisements and those produced overseas, and must be familiar with the requirements of this law.
- *Employment of Non-Citizens Act (undated)*: There may be some positions in the media industry that cannot be filled locally and must be advertised overseas. An application must be lodged for work permit approval from the Department of Labour and Employment. In the application the organisation has to detail the company's localisation program.
- *National Library and Archives Act 1993*: Clause 17-23 deals with Legal Deposit. It is a requirement that two copies of any work published in PNG (including newspapers and magazines) must be deposited with the National Library of Papua New Guinea in an undamaged condition and without request by the National Library prior to its release. The requirement is enforceable by law.
- *Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act 2000*: A lot of written and electronically transmitted material used by the media, especially music, is produced overseas or by citizens of PNG. Media operators must know what this law says about copyright and neighbouring rights.

There is no legislation for newspaper licensing in PNG but all newspaper publishers are required to register under the *Printers and Newspapers Act 1956*.

While there are community radio stations, there is no specific provision in the legislation for community radio. However, the PANGTEL licence application does make provision for non-commercial media. A Radio Spectrum Licence issued to the licensee specifies the terms and conditions for each licence category, and PANGTEL does not collect service licence fees from non-commercial (community) broadcasters.

It is possible to get approval for a licence from PANGTEL within six months of lodging an application if all PANGTEL requirements are fulfilled, technical and non-technical. However, with the amendment to the *Telecommunications Act*, the ICCC also has to vet the applications for economic reasons, such as applications that involve satellite and cable television. To date the government has not refused a licence application nor has a media organisation lost its licence.

The fees payable for different licence categories are:

- Nationwide FM commercial stations: K500 (AU\$208)⁵ spectrum licence fee plus an annual fee of one per cent of gross annual revenue of the station (about K30,000).
- Local FM commercial stations: K500 spectrum licence fee plus an annual service fee of one per cent of gross annual revenue (about K10,000).
- Television: K2500 spectrum service licence fee plus an annual service fee of one per cent of gross annual revenue of the station (about K50,000).
- Non-commercial community radio or television: spectrum fee charged but, as noted, no service fee.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

Freedom of the media is a qualified under section 46, Freedom of Expression, in the Constitution:

- (1) *Every person has the right to freedom of expression and publication, except to the extent that the exercise of that right is regulated or restricted by a law –*
- (a) *that imposes reasonable restrictions on public office-holders; or*
 - (b) *that imposes restrictions on non-citizens; or*
 - (c) *that complies with Section 38 (General Qualifications on Qualified Rights).*

- (2) *In subsection (1), ‘freedom of expression and publication’ includes –*
- (a) *freedom to hold opinions, to receive ideas and information and to communicate ideas and information, whether to the public generally or for a person or class of persons; and*
 - (b) *freedom of the press and other mass communications media.*
- (3) *Notwithstanding anything in this section, an Act of Parliament may make reasonable provision for securing reasonable access to the mass communications media for interested persons and associations –*
- (a) *for the communication of ideas and information; and*
 - (b) *to allow rebuttal of false or misleading statements concerning their acts, ideas or beliefs, and generally for enabling and encouraging freedom of expression.*

The right to freedom of information is a qualified right under section 51, Right to Freedom of Information (FOI).⁶ PNG is one of a few Pacific Island countries that includes this guarantee in its Constitution. However, the legislation required to facilitate this has not been enacted. There is no separate FOI legislation, although Transparency International (TI), PNG, with the support of the Media Council of Papua New Guinea has previously drafted an FOI Bill for consideration.

1.3 Media regulation

PANGTEL’s technical radio inspectors check equipment to ensure that the operator follows conditions as per the requirements. The policy section and the consumer affairs desk monitor the operations and take note of complaints from the public, which may come directly to them or through reports in the media, and these are followed up. These include consumer complaints about poor signals from radio or television. In theory, PANGTEL’s policy section should monitor the local content output and ensure that the operator honours that commitment.⁷ However, because of the 10-year licences, operators tend not to be cautioned until a year before the expiration of their licences. It is also likely the licence will be renewed without appropriate attention to the 70 per cent local content requirement and the community service obligation.

All the media organisations have to operate within the *Classification of Publication (Censorship) Act 1989*, which includes radio and television. This covers the classification of publications, the prohibition of objectionable and unclassified publications, and related purposes. The Act does not apply to a publication that is sponsored by the national or provincial government or material that is being transported within PNG for delivery to a place outside of PNG.

The Office of the Chief Censor acts on public complaints about suitability of programs broadcast on radio and television, and has the power to ban printed material, videotapes and DVDs, and regularly does.

Over the last decade, PNG governments have called for media regulation when news reports that are critical of government activities have been published. According to the President of the Media Council of Papua New Guinea, some politicians have argued:

We need legislation to punish publications or authors of reports that are critical of the government.

We need to control media houses or publications through licensing and through deterrents.

They have argued that this is necessary because they believed the articles ‘demeaned government’ and because the media did not inform the government about the articles prior to publication.⁸

This tension between government and the media is on-going and has been a feature of PNG government-media relationships. At the heart of this is a fundamental issue – how can the media best serve the national interest and/or national development in a developing country? Some politicians interpret this as media that are supportive of government, publishing only positive stories, and do not appreciate that the media has a responsibility to the public to be objective and analytical.

1.4 Defamation

Section 2 of the *Defamation Act 1962* (Chapter No. 293) of the Revised Laws of Papua New Guinea defines defamatory matter as:

- (1) *An imputation concerning a person, or a member of his family whether living or dead, by which*
- (a) *the reputation of that person is likely to be injured: or*

- (b) he is likely to be injured in his profession, or trade; or
- (c) other persons are likely to be induced to shun, avoid, ridicule or despise that person is a defamatory imputation.

Section 3 defines defamation as a person who:

- (a) by spoken words or audible sounds; or
- (b) by words intended to be read by sight or touch; or
- (c) by signs, signals, gestures or visible representations, publishes a defamatory imputation concerning a person defames that person within the meaning of this Act.

Use of this Act is common, chiefly by politicians, and acts as a constraint on investigative journalism and on the development of new, governance focused media organisations.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

The local content requirement for each radio and television operator is specified in the terms and conditions of the licence issued to the operator under the *Radio Spectrum Act*. As all radio and television licences are for a 10-year period, a television licence issued in 1997 would have a schedule listing the terms and conditions whereby after two years of operation, the company must provide a five-year plan for nationwide service if a nationwide service licence is issued. The five-year plan must strive to promote local content, and five to six years after the issuing of the licence the local content must be 70 per cent. Radio operators are also required to transmit their signal to areas with electricity.

The requirement for commercial television is also 70 per cent local content after five years of operation. As noted earlier, the onus is on PANGTEL's regulatory section to ensure that the national television station EMTV and the commercial radio stations operate within the terms of their licence. However, the *Telecommunications Industry Act 2002* does not indicate if the responsibility of regulation and monitoring of broadcast licences falls within the domain of PANGTEL or the ICCC. DSEI has, as noted, been recently created but there is no monitoring division in place yet to follow up on the licence requirements, nor is it clear whether this will be part of its responsibilities. The issue of who monitors licence requirements, PANGTEL, the ICCC or the DSEI, requires clarification.

There is no separate legislation for community service requirements for radio and television.

The Radio Spectrum Licence issued to an operator requires the operator to provide a growth plan that includes community service requirements.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The National Broadcasting Service (NBC) is a government-owned statutory corporation.

The *Broadcasting Corporation Act* states that:

1. *Subject to this Act, it is the duty of the Corporation to provide balanced, objective and impartial broadcasting services within and, if so directed by the Head of State, acting on advice, outside the country, and in so doing to take, in the interests of the community, all such measures as, in the opinion of the Corporation, are conducive to the full development of suitable broadcasting programmes.*
2. *In particular, the Corporation shall –*
 - (a) *ensure that the services that it provides, when considered as a whole, reflect the drive for national unity and at the same time give adequate expression to the culture, characteristics, affairs, opinions and needs of the people of the various parts of the country and in particular of rural areas; and*
 - (b) *do all in its power to preserve and stimulate pride in the indigenous and traditional cultural heritage of Papua New Guinea; and*
 - (c) *take extreme care in broadcasting material that could inflame racial or sectional feelings; and*
 - (d) *co-operate with the Government in broadcasting social, political and economic extension, and educational programmes.*
3. *At the request of the Minister, the Corporation may make recommendations to the Minister concerning the granting of licences for broadcasting services under the Radio Spectrum Act 1996 and the conditions of those licences.*

Section 7. the Corporation policy and Government policy states:

1. *From time to time the Government shall advise the Corporation of its policies and priorities.*
2. *Subject to this Act, the Corporation shall broadcast from all stations under its control, or from such of them as the Minister specifies, any matter the broadcasting of which is directed by the Minister in writing as being in the national interest.*
3. *Subject to this Act, the Minister may, from time to time, by telegram or in writing –*
 - (a) *prohibit the Corporation from broadcasting any matter, or matter of any class or character, specified in the notice; or*
 - (b) *request the Corporation to refrain from broadcasting any such matter.*
4. *The Corporation shall include in its annual report all cases in which the powers conferred by Subsections (2) and (3) have been exercised, and all such cases shall be laid before the Parliament at the first meeting after receipt of the report by the Minister.⁹*

The NBC's Managing Director is appointed by the Prime Minister, acting on advice from the National Executive Council (NEC, equivalent to Cabinet). The reasons for the decision are not disclosed to the public. The Managing Director reports through the NBC Board to the government minister responsible for the Department (at present, the Minister for State Enterprises and Information).

The NBC Board is responsible for the affairs of the corporation. Board members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair, are appointed by the NEC. The involvement of government in the appointment of the Managing Director and the Board has made the NBC vulnerable to political influence in the past and has not served the corporation well.

1.7 Government funding for media

The NBC receives an annual budget from government. The budget for 2004–05 was K8.3 million, and the 2005–06 budget is K10.7m. Until 2005 the core funding only covered the national service. The provincial governments are responsible for meeting the operational costs of the 19 provincial stations, but the funding to these stations has not been consistent. In 1995 the government estimated the cost of running a provincial radio station at K200,000 per year; however, no station has received this amount from their provincial government.¹⁰ The NBC sought extra funding for its 2005–06 budget, and has provided K55,000 to each provincial station to cover operations.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

The three major newspapers, the nationwide radio licensees (NBC, PNG FM and FM100) and national television service EMTV are all based in Port Moresby.

Radio

- The NBC operates the Karai national public radio service and the provincial Kundu service, made up of the 19 stations based in the provincial capitals. Karai broadcasts in English, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu. The Kundu stations broadcast in English, Tok Pisin and the local languages for each province. The NBC also has a commercial music station in Port Moresby and Rabaul.
- PNG FM is based in Port Moresby and operates two commercial radio stations 93FM (Yumi FM) and 96FM (Nau FM). PNG FM is 100 per cent owned by Communications Fiji Limited (CFL), Fiji. Yumi FM broadcasts in Tok Pisin and Nau FM broadcasts in English. PNG FM does not publish online as it said there is no market for this.
- FM100 is a commercial radio station (previously part of the NBC), state-owned through Telikom PNG Limited and operated by Kalang Advertising Limited. FM100 broadcasts in English. However, during its popular talkback program, many listeners call in and speak Tok Pisin with the host.
- FM Central and FM Morobe are operated by Hirad Holdings Ltd, which has been issued a nationwide radio licence but it has not established this network. No details on proposed content were available.

There are also numerous non-commercial licences:

- Radio Wantok Light FM is owned by landowners from the Southern Highlands. It also has a shortwave licence.
- The Catholic Radio Network of Papua New Guinea (CRN PNG) is an extension of Catholic missionary work. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (CBC PNG and SI) owns and operates the network through their Commission for Social Communication. The network consists of six stations.¹¹
- CDI FM is a community radio station located in the Community Development Initiative (CDI) Foundation's Kikori Training Centre. It supports the work of CDI Foundation by broadcasting information related to health, education, agriculture and general rural community development to communities in Kikori, Samberigi and Kutubu in the Gulf and Southern Highlands Provinces of Papua New Guinea. It also supports the work of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) through the Kikori Integrated Conservation and Development Project, promoting sustainable use and management of natural resources.¹² CDI also publishes a regular newsletter.
- Baibel FM, or Krai Bilong Baibel (KBB) FM, Mount Hagen and Baibel FM Goroka are owned and operated by Brad Wells.
- Waima Radio, Christian radio station, which broadcasts to 20 villages on the PNG south coast, where Waima is spoken.
- PNG Laif FM, Wewak, contemporary Pacific and Western Christian music, and bible programs affiliated with the United Christian Broadcasters (UCB) Pacific Partners.¹³
- Ok Tedi Development Foundation FM.
- Bougainville Radio.
- Radio UPNG, a University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) student radio training medium for journalism students.
- Radio DWU, a student radio project at the Divine Word University (DWU), Madang.

Newspapers

- The *Papua New Guinea Post-Courier* is a national newspaper published Monday to Friday. The head office is in Port Moresby and it has offices at Mount Hagen, Kokopo, Lae and Buka. It is majority-owned by Applied Press, a subsidiary of News Corporation, and PNG citizens own 29.34 per cent through the Public Officers Superannuation Fund, Public Employees Association, Defence Forces Retirement Fund and individual share parcels. The Post-Courier publishes in English, and its circulation is 26,272.¹⁴ It is also available online at <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/>.

The *National* newspaper is a national newspaper published five days a week (Monday to Friday). It has offices in Port Moresby and five outstations, Madang, Lae, Kokopo, Goroka and Mount Hagen. It is owned by Rimbunan Hijau, a Malaysian company which is also PNG's dominant forestry company. The company has been the subject of considerable criticism because of its logging activities and work practices.¹⁵ The National publishes in English, and its circulation is 22,000.¹⁶ It is also available online at <http://www.thenational.com.pg>.

- *Wantok Niuspepa* is a national weekly newspaper published in Tok Pisin. The newspaper is church owned and operated: Catholic (55 per cent), Lutheran (25 per cent), United (10 per cent) and Anglican (10 per cent). It is registered as the Word Publishing Company. Wantok is not available online. The current circulation is 10,000 to 12,000 copies per week.
- The government's 12-page monthly paper, *Gavamani Sivarai*, prints 20,000 copies each month, with 10,000 copies inserted in both the National and Wantok Niuspepa.
- People's Forum is a free monthly publication in Port Moresby.

Television

- EMTV is a national free-to-air television station formerly owned by Media Niugini (a subsidiary of Australia's Channel Nine Network). The station was sold to Fiji Television Limited in late 2004. It broadcasts in English and Tok Pisin. Its website has been under construction for some years.¹⁷
- A non-commercial television licence has been issued by PANGTEL. It is believed that the operator is the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

2.2

Radio and television program formats

The NBC's Karai national service contains educational and information programs focusing on health, good governance, women's and children issues, rural issues, development issues, spiritual and community service, and sport. The News Director expanded on this:

As a national and public broadcaster, our objectives is to inform, entertain, educate and promote the development of the people and the country of PNG through the production of relevant and quality radio programs. The NBC encourages discussion on political, social, spiritual and economic issues, promotes national unity, the preservation of PNG cultures and develops international awareness by utilising modern new technology and making the most effective use of its resources. We operate nationwide all over the country therefore the interests of the people including those in the rural areas is paramount.

The potential of the Karai service has been constrained by the NBC's current staffing structure, which is dominated by administrative and technical staff, with a smaller number of producers and journalists. Program formats and approaches on the Karai service are also dated. There tends to be a focus on filling or selling timeslots rather than on creative, innovative and well-targeted programs.¹⁸

PNG FM's Yumi FM broadcasts a mix of music, news and features, such as talkback, health and women's issues, in Tok Pisin. Nau FM features music and entertainment-based programs and broadcasts in English. It also includes topics such as HIV/AIDS and youth suicide in its programs, including Sunday night's Soul for Real.

FM100 (Hits and Memories) spends at least 30 per cent of its programming time dedicated to community service obligations. The program format is popular hits songs from the 1960s, '70s, '80s and '90s and the best of today's latest hits. Talkback radio between 9 am and 12 noon, Monday to Friday, discusses community issues, such as health and good governance:

While it is a commercial radio station, we like to think of ourselves as a community radio station and as such aim to be as informative as possible, ensuring that the interest of the people is a priority. We try to give as much prominence to issues affecting the people in rural areas as we give to issues of national interest. (Station Manager)

EMTV broadcasts a mix of local and overseas entertainment, news and sports programs targeting different age groups. There are occasions where EMTV broadcasts video footage taken by people in the provinces, supplied by Melpa Media Productions in Mount Hagen, the Religious Television Association (RTA) in Port Moresby and DWU Communication Arts students. The ownership of RTA by the four mainstream churches (Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and United Church) is an added advantage for EMTV in accessing news features on the church contribution to health and education in many parts of PNG.

2.3

Focus of newspapers

The *Post-Courier* states that its focus is 'to inform Papua New Guineans and the world without prejudice, so that free speech, free thinking and open participation remain the foundation of the nation'. News from the provinces is carried in the 'Home' news section. The paper runs the regional news section each week, a two-page Rural Industry Weekly section on Thursdays has news on agriculture and rural industries, and a 'New Age Woman' section on the last Thursday of every month. The *Post-Courier* also publishes 60 copies of a braille newspaper for distribution to the Mt Sion School for the Blind in Goroka and the St John Association for the Blind in Port Moresby.

The Editor of the *National* said its focus is 'to provide a balanced, accurate reflection of news as it happens in PNG, uniting people in non-violent sports to promote culture and positive healthy living and be a tool in uniting our diverse nation'. The paper aims to include at least one story and picture from its five outstations on each of the local news pages.

Wantok's focus is to promote gospel values through encouraging total human development and to disseminate information so that people can form objective judgments. This includes in-depth reporting on a wide range of institutions, including the churches, stories and long features on development issues, and information on agriculture and business. *Wantok* encourages reader participation in order to reflect a wide variety of opinions.

2.4

Target audience and distribution

The target audience for the *Post-Courier* is the PNG population who are English speakers. The age groups include primary school level, 10 to 13 years (on Tuesdays there is a children's lift-

out), young adults and all age groups to 50 years and over. The *Post-Courier* is distributed in Port Moresby and all the main centres of the 19 provinces through agents. The entire content of the newspaper is archived on News Limited's database.

The *National* targets young primary school children to older readers between the ages of 15 and 50 years, both male and female, who are employed. The *National* is distributed to all major cities and towns where a plane can land, and mine sites. The newspaper is not distributed in rural areas where there are no reliable distribution outlets. The *National* online includes local news for overseas readers and those in provinces who have access to internet and cannot get a copy of the newspaper.

Wantok targets young adults, both male and female, between the ages of 15 and 35 years, and other members of the community who are literate in Tok Pisin. *Wantok* has limited distribution in the main centres of all 19 provinces of PNG due to the high cost of air freight.

NBC's target audience is all of the PNG population. The Karai service transmits via medium wave and shortwave. All 19 provincial NBC stations broadcast on SW transmission. SW gives them a good reach in the mountainous terrain, but many parts of East Sepik and the Southern Highlands are unable to get reasonable signals. It is a common occurrence for the provincial stations to be off-air due to technical problems or broken equipment and, depending on the seriousness of the problem, the station may be off-air for a couple of weeks to three months or more. A number of the provincial stations are also seriously under-resourced (human and technical resources) and this constrains their program output.

Yumi FM has a target audience of Tok Pisin speakers 30 years and over in the rural communities. Nau FM targets the 16–24 age group who are urban youth living in the main centres of PNG. PNG FM has 16 transmission sites throughout PNG. The only major areas not covered are the East and West Sepik provinces. Each site, depending on the size of the transmitter, covers a minimum of 100 km to 200 km radius, determined by line-of-sight of the FM signal.

FM100's target audience is Papua New Guineans and the international community aged from 20 to 45 years and up. Transmission range covers the NCD and the Magi and Hiritano highways in the Central Province, Tabubil and most parts of Western Province, Lae and Ramu, Madang, Mount Hagen, Goroka, Alotau and Rabaul. The transmitters are located strategically and each transmitter covers a radius of a minimum of 100 km to 200 km, depending on its size.

EMTV targets the PNG public, with programs for a range of age groups. It is estimated that the television service reaches about 45 per cent of the PNG population through 13 transmitter stations that relay to 11 provinces and the national coverage via Indonesia's Palapa B2P satellite and the Russian Gorizont satellite. However, only people in this footprint who have access to electricity and television receivers can pick up the signal.

2.5 Community and sponsorship issues

The *Post-Courier* has never conducted a survey of its readers. There have been discussions about this but nothing has eventuated. The paper gets feedback through letters (posted, hand delivered and email) and these show that readers are interested in politics, leadership issues, health, especially HIV/AIDS, law and order, women's issues and education.

The *National* conducts periodic in-house surveys. It does not conduct regular surveys as this is not seen as a priority. In the early years of the *National*, advertising agencies carried out regular surveys for the paper. Letters to the editor and emails indicate that readers are eager for news and current affairs on governance issues.

Wantok Niuspepa includes a readers' survey in the newspaper every three years. The management feels that three years is sufficient time to gauge its readers' news interests and revamp the newspaper accordingly. *Wantok's* Editor said, 'Readers would like more local and world news stories, political news, sports and world commodity prices for crops such as vanilla and cocoa.' According to the last survey, one newspaper purchased in town is read by 10 other people in the village.

NBC's News Director said it had not done an audience survey due to funding constraints. It receives audience feedback through phone calls, word of mouth, letters and talkback.

PNG FM carries out quarterly listener surveys for both radio stations. This is supplemented periodically with specific surveys testing new programs or music, conducted by an advertising agency.¹⁹

FM100 does not conduct audience surveys due to financial constraints.

The only known official study on the television viewing habits of Papua New Guineans was carried out in June 1994. Titled 'TV Impact Study on Pari and Hanuabada Villages, Papua New Guinea'; the study was conducted by the Policy and Research Division of the then Department of Information and Communication. Interviews were conducted with 20 families, two women's groups and one men's group from Hanuabada and Pari, two large urban villages in Port Moresby.

2.6 NGO and government access

For the *Post-Courier*, press releases from government and NGOs are used as source material to develop news stories. There are occasions where a two-page or four-page lift-out is taken out by a government department, such as the Department of Environment to celebrate World Environment Day. The cost is worked out with the advertising and supplements section.

The *Post-Courier* publishes the *Rural Industries Weekly* from regular information provided by the Department of Agriculture and the National Agriculture Research Institute. The National Research Institute's Director writes a weekly column on accelerating girls' education; TI contributes to the weekly 'Forum' column; and an academic from UPNG writes a column on governance issues.

The *National* says all articles from government and NGOs are treated as news sources and used free of charge; however, in the case of advertising, the rate card is applied. The Editor said, 'Unfortunately the NGOs give us a wide berth because of the parent company of this newspaper in the logging industry.'

A special four-page lift-out in *Wantok* is about K1000. There is a reduced rate for NGOs and churches for advertising. All press statements are treated as possible news stories; however, if a government department or ministry wants to run the statement word for word, it is treated as a paid advertisement and the classified rates apply. The only condition made by the publisher is that the advertisement or statement is not defamatory.

Wantok receives press releases and stories from the Forestry Authority, Agriculture, Health and the National AIDS Council. No NGOs provide regular news stories except for the churches. *Wantok's* Editor said the paper did not get much contact from NGOs, and is unclear about NGO advocacy work.

An NBC 30-minute program costs K500 for NGOs and government departments. Government departments and NGOs that use the NBC on a regular basis are: Health, Education, the Prime Minister's office, Police, Finance and Treasury, Agriculture, Environment, National AIDS Council, Police, YWCA, Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), United Church and women's groups. There is also a weekly government talkback program live on Monday nights, with different government departments rostered each week.

PNG FM has reduced rates for government departments for community service announcements only. A reduced rate of 40 per cent is given for health and community service announcements, such as for HIV/AIDS. Nau FM provides free community service announcements three times a day. Sports clubs, churches, schools, police, fire safety and charity groups use this service.

PNG FM receives press releases from the Prime Minister's office, Finance, Inter-Government Relations, Health, Education, Fisheries, Works, Bougainville Affairs, Community Development, the National AIDS Council, and TI. PNG FM works closely with TI, environmental NGO groups, UNICEF and the National AIDS Council.

FM100's program time is charged at K45 per 30 seconds. Discounts apply for government departments only. FM100 was not able to provide rates for NGO programs because, to date, no NGOs have made programs. However, FM100 said it was in regular contact with the following NGOs: Anglicare Stop AIDS, Individual and Community Rights Advocacy Forum (ICRAF), CDI, WWF, the Red Cross, the Amalgamated Workers Union, Telikom Workers Union, Friends Foundation, Trade Union Congress and other unions.

EMTV has two weekly programs, *Insait* and *Tok Piksa*, which feature interviews with government departments, churches, TI, the National AIDS Council and groups involved in health, education, governance, law and order and other social concerns. EMTV also broadcasts, free of charge, the Department of Education pilot program for secondary school children and has agreed to regularly air parliamentary broadcasts. EMTV is prepared to broadcast development programs free of charge at non-peak times because it costs the station less to run its transmitters 24 hours a day than to turn them off.²⁰

2.7

Journalism resources

The *Post-Courier* has 42 full-time journalists, nine of whom are in its four out-stations.²¹ Two journalists, including the Chief Political Journalist, undertake investigative journalism. The average journalism experience is three to six years. A diploma in journalism is the minimum requirement for cadets but the *Post-Courier* has plans to increase this to a degree in journalism or media studies. The majority of the journalists have diploma in journalism. Journalists earn a minimum of K12,000 to a maximum of between K100,000 and K120,000 (Chief of Staff) per annum. The figures quoted here include a housing allowance, children's school fees and vehicle allowance.

The turnover is not high. One journalist left in 2004 after working at the newspaper for two years. Those who leave usually get a job in public relations in the private sector. The Editor said:

We know that reporters will not remain at the Post-Courier; they will want to move on at some stage. This is okay too as it also gives an opportunity for others to come in and work and raise the standard of reporting.

The *Post-Courier* accepts journalism students from UPNG and DWU for work attachment at its bureaus (20 in 2004) and subsequently offers some of them employment.

The *National* has thirty journalists, nine in its five out-stations and the rest in the Port Moresby head office. There are up to four investigative journalists. Average journalism experience is 10–15 years for the older staff and three years among the younger journalists. More than half the journalists are young men and women with three years experience in the newsroom. The minimum level of education required for journalism recruits is Grade 12. The *National* has one journalist with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in literature, ten journalists with a diploma in journalism from UPNG, and eleven with a diploma from DWU. The remainder have matriculation (Grade 12) level with on-the-job training in various newsrooms. There is one journalist with a diploma in teaching.

Salary at the *National* ranges from between K3000 and K30,000. This does not take into account the additional allowances, such as petrol allowance, housing allowance and school fees, which may be negotiated with the management before the contract is signed.

The *National's* Editor said younger journalists straight out of journalism school stay on average for two years. The main reason given for leaving is the opportunity for a better paid job.

Wantok Niuspepa has six journalists, including the Editor, in Port Moresby and three regular provincial stringers. There is one investigative journalist. The journalists have an average of five years journalism experience. *Wantok* recruits cadets who have completed Grade 12 (matriculation) but would prefer graduates with a diploma or degree in journalism. Four journalists have a diploma in journalism from DWU, and one has a Bachelor of Arts from UPNG.

Wantok's salary range is K3000 to K25,000, the lesser being for a first-year recruit during the probation period of three months. On confirmation of a permanent appointment the journalist would be paid K5000 to K7000 per annum. The lowest paid public servant receives K5000 to K10,000 per annum.

Journalists at *Wantok Niuspepa* stay for about three years on average. Many leave for personal reasons, while others leave to work as public relations or press officers in the private sector or government departments.

At NBC there are fourteen journalists, including the Editor and the Chief of Staff, with an average of five years journalism experience. There are two investigative journalists. Journalists are required to have a diploma in journalism and most have these from UPNG or DWU. Two journalists have degrees with majors in language and communications. Currently one journalist is studying full time at UPNG, and is due to graduate in March 2005. In 2005 two journalists will study full time at UPNG or DWU. Salary range is K7000 to K38,000.

Journalists at the NBC stay for five to ten years, and leave for personal reasons or other job offers.

PNG FM has eight journalists and two editors in the Port Moresby office and twelve stringers in the provinces. The journalists are divided between Nau FM and Yumi FM. However, when covering news conferences one journalist would file stories for both stations. They have on average three years journalism experience. Recruits are required to have a diploma in journalism. The News Director has a diploma in journalism from UPNG, while the journalists have diplomas in journalism from DWU. In the case of the stringers, some have a diploma in journalism. Most stringers, such as a teacher from Kiunga and a public servant in Madang, are employed by other organisations,

filing stories as they occur, and have many years previous experience stringing for the print media. Minimum salary is K6000 and the maximum K30,000 (News Director).

Journalists at PNG FM usually stay for an average of three to four years, and leave to work at government departments or with donor agencies.

There are five journalists at FM100, including the Editor. There is one investigative journalist. Journalists have on average three years experience. A diploma in media studies or journalism is the minimum level of education required for recruits. Three journalists have degrees from UPNG with journalism majors, two have majors in language and communications, and one journalist has a Diploma in journalism from DWU. Journalists' salaries range from K7000 to K21,000.

FM100's newsroom has only been operational for four years. A few journalists have left for personal reasons or for further studies, or have moved into public relations.

EMTV employs seven journalists and a News Director in its Port Moresby office. The station does not have any offices outside of Port Moresby. There is one investigative journalist. The journalists have on average three years experience. Minimum education requirement is a degree or diploma in journalism. Two journalists have diplomas from UPNG and six journalists have diplomas from DWU. The estimated salary range is K5000–30,000.

Journalists stay at EMTV for three years on average. At least four journalists have left to upgrade their qualifications at UPNG and DWU.

Equipment resources

Post-Courier has telephones and computers with internet access and digital cameras in the main Port Moresby office and the Lae, Kokopo, Mount Hagen and Buka offices. Bureau journalists have access to mobile phones (in the event of Telikom outages), with monthly allowances from the organisation. *Post-Courier* staff also have access to News Limited's library of 177 newspapers for research. Telephone access to rural areas is good as long as there is no problem with Telikom PNG. Equipment is described as adequate for current needs.

The *National's* head office in Port Moresby and its five outstations, Madang, Lae, Kokopo, Goroka and Mount Hagen are linked by computer, with stories and photographs emailed to the Port Moresby office. Equipment is described as adequate for current needs.

Wantok Niuspepa has computers internet access, telephones, fax and digital cameras. At present the equipment is sufficient for the small editorial team of five journalists and one editor. The provincial stringers rely on public telephone and fax to send in their stories, which can be a slow way to get rural stories in on time.

NBC has computers, telephones to record interviews and research stories, access to email and internet, Sony recorders and mini-disk recorders. The NBC is just starting to use Cool Edit for digital audio editing, in anticipation of better quality sound. There is room for more improvement in resources and equipment.

PNG FM has computers, internet access, the ability to edit audio on computer and telephone access to the rural areas. However, PNG FM said it needed another two tape recorders as currently there are only two available. This means that all the journalists cannot take a tape recorder on assignment.

FM100 has computers and uses the Cool Edit program for recording, editing and production. Journalists also have dictaphones for press conferences or to conduct interviews. FM100 said the equipment is adequate and Cool Edit has allowed them to work well and with excellent sound quality.

EMTV's journalists have computers, internet access, telephone access to the provinces and an AVID suite used for video editing. No further details were available on production and editing equipment.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

NBC's Karai service broadcasts 18 news bulletins (some are news briefs) daily. There are journalists in each province who file stories daily. Some of these are featured in the current issues program after the news at 7.10 am and the evening current issues program at 7.10 pm. The News Director said. 'The public has the right to know what is happening, such as news that affects their lives, their livelihood, their jobs, and their families. News that is informative, educational, entertainment and which promotes development and national unity.'

PNG FM's Nau FM has nine main bulletins, and three headlines. Yumi FM produces thirteen main bulletins and four headlines. Yumi FM previously broadcast a talkback program but this has been discontinued. There are no current affairs programs due to limited airtime.

FM100 broadcasts seven news bulletins daily and daily talkback, and community affairs or government issues programs Monday to Friday in the morning.

EMTV has a major bulletin at 6 pm, with a Tok Pisin summary of the 6 pm bulletin read at 6.59 pm (although labelled News Update). The 6 pm bulletin is replayed at 10.30 pm. There are two weekly current affairs programs, referred to earlier, *Insait* and *Tok Piksa*.

2.9 Media and governance priorities

The *Post-Courier* lists corruption, law and order, health, HIV/AIDS, women's issues, rural issues, education and literacy as governance priorities. In October 2004 the editorial management ran a half-day workshop for all its journalists on the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) so that they could produce stories on what the PNG government is doing to achieve these goals. As a result of the *Post-Courier's* campaign on gun control, a national gun summit will be held in Goroka in 2005.

The *National's* governance priorities are corruption, transparency and accountability, followed by development issues, such as agriculture, social issues, including health and education, and issues related to the different levels of government and the question of autonomy. The paper pledged to promote positive health and healthy living by launching a Health Expo, which is now an annual event in Port Moresby.

The Editor of *Wantok Niuspepa* said its readers' interests will determine the placing of news, such as the price of food and other basic items. He said that the average *Wantok* reader is not employed by government or private institutions and is concerned about the increasing cost of living, corruption, and law and order, because these affect people's lives, and governance issues such as health and education.

NBC cited good governance, health and education, women's and children's issues and social issues as governance priorities.

PNG FM's governance priorities include the concept of good leadership, politics and environmental issues and issues of public safety. The News Director said:

We attempt to get at least one story on education, health, business, marriage or development projects each day. The stories are then written up in a way that is simple and relevant to the target audience of each station. However, this can be difficult when sources or contacts are not available.

FM100 cited politics, accountability, social concerns and human rights issues.

In 2002–03 EMTV carried a series of public awareness messages on the deteriorating condition of the Highlands Highway (the highway that links the Highlands provinces to the coastal cities of Lae and Madang), encouraging the public to ensure that their local MPs address the state of this national infrastructure. EMTV also broadcasts RTA footage from Bougainville and development stories from the provinces on education, health and the effects of natural disasters on the rural population of PNG.

The *Post-Courier*, the *National*, *Wantok* and EMTV have received donor funding for media social awareness campaigns instigated by the Media Council of Papua New Guinea, such as the HIV/AIDS Campaign 2001–2002; Limited Preferential Voting System 2003; and the War on Corruption 2001.

PNG FM received funding from UNICEF for the International Children's Broadcasting Day; and the British High Commission is currently sponsoring a civic education program. In 2004 FM100 received funding from the European Union (EU) for a campaign on HIV/AIDS. It also received funding from the British High Commission for a proactive campaign on good governance, and is negotiating with UNICEF to fund a program on the Accelerated Girls' Education (AGE) program, violence and abuse against women and children and other disadvantaged groups.

The united effort by the media on issues of national importance, such as the fight against corruption, family violence, the rights of children and the importance of electing good leaders, is a particular feature of the media industry in PNG.

2.10 Average number of daily local news stories

The *Post-Courier*, a 32-page paper (the minimum is 32 and maximum 72 pages), has an average of 25 to 30 local stories and 13 to 15 local sports stories.

In a 32-page standard issue, the *National* has only 9 pages that carry overseas news and sports, while the rest are local news and features. On average there are 34 local news stories. In addition to that, there is also one full page of 'Opinion', with 3 articles; one page of 'Focus', with 3 articles; and one page with 11 letters to the editor and 9 local sports stories.

Wantok Niuspepa has about 39 to 40 local news stories in a 32-page standard issue, along with one full page of local entertainment, one full page of local commentary and one full page of letters to the editor, 8 local sports stories, and one full page of local sports photographs and fixtures.

The NBC's Karai service produces 20 to 30 local stories per day.

PNG FM has approximately 38 local stories a day, including sports. Each journalist is required to produce 4 stories a day.

FM100 has 16 local stories per day.

EMTV produces 6 local news stories and 3 local sports stories for its main evening bulletin.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

The *Post-Courier's* main news-gathering techniques include news leads by phone, email or word of mouth, interviews, press releases and press conferences. The *Post-Courier* has access to News Limited's bureaus around the world, PINA Nius Online, Australian Associated Press (AAP) and Reuters. PINA Nius Online is used extensively for the Pacific news and the rest of world news is accessed through the News Limited network free of charge.

The *National* listed telephone interviews, press releases, press conferences and personal interviews with sources. The *National* rarely uses email for interviews. Regional and overseas news services used are PACNEWS, Reuters, AAP and Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Wantok uses press releases, press conferences, contact with sources, and phone interviews, internet for overseas news and sports stories, PACNEWS for regional news and more recently Radio Australia's Tok Pisin news service.

The NBC uses interviews, press conferences, press releases, interviews and PACNEWS.

PNG FM listed press releases, press conferences and interviews with news sources. PACNEWS is used for regional news.

FM100 listed press conferences, interviews, press releases and talkback program recordings. FM100 has an arrangement with Radio Australia to relay its news at scheduled times daily.

EMTV uses interviews with sources and press conferences.

2.12 Media access to government content

Proceedings of the previous day's session of Parliament are available to journalists. However, at the end of the three-week parliamentary sitting, it is often difficult to get the proceedings of the last week's session, as limited copies of the Hansard are made and journalists have to wait for up to a month before the full three week's proceedings are available. The NBC and EMTV only cover Question Time (10 am to 11 am).

The *Post-Courier* newspaper keeps its own database of government information, as the government's website is not updated regularly enough. The Editor also keeps his own running file of the Prime Minister's speeches and major policy statements. On a daily or weekly basis, journalists on their rounds would contact sources at the hospital, the police and the courts, and the ministries of Education, Health, Justice and Attorney-General, Agriculture and Livestock, National Planning and Rural Development, Community Development (social welfare and youth), as well as the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) and the Electoral Commission. The journalists have a good relationship with the government press officers, some of whom were fellow students at DWU or UPNG or may have worked at the *Post-Courier*. Non-government rounds include the PNG EcoForest Forum and TI.

The *National's* Editor said the newspaper has a good relationship with all government ministries and regular contact is maintained by the journalists assigned the different rounds. The rounds are police, courts, hospital, law and order, schools, politics, church and industrial relations.

The *National* said the following government ministries, departments and agencies produce information on a regular basis: the Prime Minister's office and the NEC; the PNG Forest Authority (PNGFA); the ministries of Health, Education, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Livestock, Finance and Treasury, and National Planning and Rural Development; the DSEI, Department of Police and the Department of Provincial Affairs and Local Government Affairs; and the Bank of Papua New Guinea. The Editor said the government website is not reliable, and too slow and cumbersome.

Wantok's Editor said the PNGFA, the departments Health, Agriculture and Livestock, and the National AIDS Council Secretariat (NACS) send media content to the newspaper on a regular basis. In addition to this, individual ministers' press officers email stories and digital pictures. The paper provides Tok Pisin translation for *Gavamani Sivarai*, the monthly newspaper published by the DSEI. Many former *Wantok* journalists are also now press officers with various government departments.

The NBC receives government speeches before they are posted on the website and, if material is posted immediately on the internet, it is used for the next available bulletin. The News Director said NBC also has a lot of access to government information through other news materials.

PNG FM's News Editor described the government website as unreliable and out of date for their needs.

FM100 said it was in regular contact with the PNGFA, the Tourism Promotion Authority (TPA) and the ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Health, Correctional Services, Community Development, and Inter-Government Relations, the Department of Police, and the Prime Minister's office. The News Editor said:

The partnership is such that they provide us with information, and we try our utmost to do as much coverage as we can. In other words we have a good working relationship with them in that when we make courtesy calls to them or to query on certain issues they respond positively.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

The media cited the following constraints:

- The *Post-Courier*: The amount of advertising.
- The *National*: Journalists' contacts, often logistical delays getting to the news as it breaks. This newspaper is also issues driven, with the Editor taking the lead in determining the news content. The Editor said advertising does not dictate whether a story is dropped; the audience interest is paramount.
- *Wantok*: Availability of staff is important in getting more local stories and priority is given to stories from the provinces and development stories.
- NBC: Available journalists and equipment.
- PNG FM: Sometimes a shortage of journalists but mostly time factors. Hourly bulletins are an issue when a journalist has to wait three hours for a source or contact to give a 'breaking or big news story'.

Provincial journalists

In August 2004 at a workshop on Reporting Law and Order, held in Goroka (organised jointly by the Law and Justice Sector, the ministry of National Planning and Rural Development and the PNG Media Council), provincial journalists from the NBC and the newspapers listed a number of constraints on their capacity to report well on rural issues:

- Lack of reliable transport, phone and fax (NBC), no access to computers or internet, basic equipment such as tape recorders, cameras, notebooks and A4 paper;
- Lack of basic resources and reference materials, such as the PNG Journalists Code of Ethics, dictionaries, the PNG Constitution, PNG Criminal Code;
- Lack of respect — provincial sources do not take reporters seriously and do not cooperate in providing information;
- Threats and intimidation, especially during election periods and when covering sensitive issues;
- Physical risks involved while on duty with recorder and cameras;
- Journalists' conditions, such as salary, housing and overtime allowance;

- Lack of political support in the provinces (NBC);
- Lack of staff — the main centre in Port Moresby sometimes forgets that the provincial staff cannot cover the entire province on their own;
- Poor training — provincial reporters are not given the opportunity to attend refresher courses;
- No support from immediate supervisors to boost morale of reporters in the field;
- Poor record of stories being published or broadcast, or given prominence, and no feedback as to why — this also makes the local community lose faith in the reporter;
- Low estimation of provincial reporters abilities by head office — when the Prime Minister or other VIPs visit the provinces, a senior reporter from Port Moresby accompanies them to write the stories instead of assigning the task to the provincial reporter;
- Lack of a good network with the provincial departments and business houses.²²

2.14 Threats to funding

The *Post-Courier* Editor said no government or corporate advertising has been withdrawn because of editorial concerns. However, both the Editor and Managing Director are concerned that the government's monthly newspaper, *Gavamani Sivarai*, is only being inserted in *Wantok* and the *National*.²³

In August 2004 the Prime Minister described the *Post-Courier* as 'toilet paper' as the result of a front-page story quoting the Opposition saying they had support from three political parties in the government coalition to remove the speaker and form a new government. By comparison, the Prime Minister referred to the *National* as a paper that 'belongs to Papua New Guinea people'.²⁴

Defamation and censorship laws do not affect news content, but the *Post-Courier* has to be cautious about the stories it publishes. Each month the company spends an average of K10,000 on legal fees (a minimum of K2000 weekly) for briefs with their lawyer. According to the Editor, most of the suits are on frivolous matters.

The *National* has not had government or corporate funding withdrawn due to editorial content but, as noted earlier, finds it hard to attract NGO content because of NGO concerns about the newspaper's owner, a Malaysian logging company.

The National AIDS Council left out *Wantok* in its first major media campaign on AIDS in 2002. The reason was that the Publisher of *Wantok* objected to the translation of sexual intercourse that the AIDS Council was using then. The government itself has not withdrawn advertising support from *Wantok* despite threats, such as former Deputy Prime Minister Ted Diro threatening to withdraw advertising support to the Word Publishing newspaper at the height of the Bougainville civil war after it reported on the use of Defence Force helicopters to drop dead bodies in the sea.

PNG FM has had no problem from the government. However, the corporate sector has withdrawn advertising support when it was not happy with editorial content.

FM100 has not had government or corporate funding withdrawn due to editorial content.

The PNG media surveyed said they were mindful of defamation. One Editor said he 'encourages journalists to write fairly and accurately to avoid a legal challenge', and others have improved their training for journalists as a result of defamation suits.

2.15 Industry training

UPNG currently has a four-year degree courses for a Bachelor of Arts, Social Science, or a Bachelor of Marine Law or Environmental Law with a major or minor in journalism. DWU offers a four-year degree course for a Bachelor of Communications Arts (Journalism). At the end of two years of study, students graduate with a diploma, with the option of continuing for the full degree.²⁵

First-year UPNG students are school leavers as well as media workers. Over the last three years, some experienced journalists with a diploma have returned to upgrade their qualification to degree level.

At DWU most of the students are school leavers, although increasingly DWU is enrolling young men and women who have already been involved in media-related work. A journalist from the *Solomon Star* has also recently made enquiries about furthering his studies at DWU.

In 2003, of the 14 students who graduated from UPNG, 6 found employment in the mainstream media, 2 went to Bougainville and have not found employment yet, and the rest are employed

as public relations officers or in other media-related work in the private sector. Of the 37 graduates from the Diploma in Communication Arts (Journalism) at DWU in 2003, 10 are working in the media, 8 were continuing their studies at DWU in 2004, and the rest are working for NGOs and government departments.

UPNG journalism students can study for an MA or a PhD in journalism. In 2004 one Masters and one PhD candidate and three Honours students were undertaking journalism. Honours students are supervised by the journalism strand leader (who has an MA), while the MA and PhD candidates are supervised by lecturers with PhDs in the political science strand.

At the moment DWU does not offer any postgraduate courses in journalism. However, the university is developing quickly, and is introducing postgraduate courses in a number of other departments.

Students at the DWU and UPNG produce student newspapers and radio and television programs, and this equips them with skills to enter the workforce. DWU students also send material on a daily basis to the two daily newspapers and two staff members are regular columnists. The UPNG student newsletter, *Uni Tavor*, is printed by the *Post-Courier* free of charge (1000–3000 copies).

In the past, members of the print and broadcast media were invited to sit on the advisory board of the Journalism School at UPNG, but with the rationalisation of the program this was discontinued. However, UPNG along with DWU is an active participant in the industry work attachment programs. Second-year DWU students do a three-week work attachment as part of their course:

They do this during their mid-year break. This year we had 40 students in second year. The media organisations have always responded positively to our requests for work experience places, and this year many more places were offered than we were actually able to fill. Also during this end-of-year holiday time, many students are working in media related workplaces. During this year's work experience 23 students chose to work in mainstream media, while the remaining 17 worked with NGOs, Information Offices and other media related work places.
(Deputy Head of Communication Arts Department, DWU)

The newer FM community radio stations and the NGO media organisations such as Melpa Media Production have seen the value of encouraging the two institutions to place their students with them for work attachment. The link that is maintained between the two institutions and the PNG Media Council is strengthened further with the Council ensuring that, where possible, students from the two institutions are included in the training programs.

The students at DWU realise that there will be limited opportunities for employment in PNG, so many are looking at other kinds of workplaces. This was a consideration in DWU's 2004 course review. As a result of this review, the curriculum will broaden in 2005 to reflect the needs of the wider communication industry in the country.

The PNG Media Council also has a well-established training program. The Training Committee was set up in 2001. All the courses have been short one-day seminars to a full week of intensive training. The Media Council decided to carry out its own training programs when it realised that PINA's limited training funds often meant that priority was given to journalists from the smaller island states, the argument being that PNG's journalists had access to two formal training schools for journalists.

The PNG Media Council's training programs include journalists and university students. Government public relations officers are invited, depending on the space available. Participants from the Solomon Islands have also attended workshops, and the Council ran a workshop on the rights of the child in the Solomon Islands.

Workshops in PNG have included the rights of the child (AusAID, Centre for Democratic Institutions and UNICEF); media ethics (Pacific Media Initiative); reporting on AIDS (National AIDS Council); and investigative reporting and law and order (Law and Justice Sector Program). In 2004 the Media Council ran courses in sports reporting, computer journalism and feature writing, and the SeaWeb Asia-Pacific course, which aimed to improve media coverage of marine conservation issues.

The Council uses its own trainers, supplemented with a few overseas trainers. It seeks funds from donor agencies and overseas missions operating in PNG to run the workshops.

In addition to the universities and the Media Council, the media industry also conducts in-house training.

At the *Post-Courier* on-the-job training for cadets is carried out daily with the Chief of Staff or the Editor. The new recruits are also encouraged to take part in the Media Council's training programs. The students from DWU and UPNG are assessed on their performance during work attachment and the best student is recruited and sent to gain experience at sister papers in Australia, such as the *Gold Coast Bulletin* and the *Cairns Post*. Sub-editors are given an opportunity to take the News Limited Editorial Essentials course online. The business journalist attended a short course on understanding spreadsheets and interpreting annual reports.

The *National* provides supervised in-house training. Cadets are also sent to local training workshops conducted by the Media Council or other training providers.

Wantok's Editor usually supervises the cadets. They are also given the opportunity to participate in local training programs organised by the Media Council. Word Publishing is the only media organisation to send its business journalists to attend a six-week course in economic policy analysis run by the National Research Institute (NRI). By 2003, 10 journalists, including the former Editor, had completed the course and received a diploma. NRI had initially offered the course at K500 per person and gradually increased the fee over the years. By 2004 NRI had increased the fee to K2500, which is too much for media organisations.

At the NBC, in the first few months, job coaching is conducted with immediate supervisors of news, current affairs and sports to enable the new recruits to get a feel for studio equipment, computers, program production and news writing. Later in-house training is also provided.

PNG FM has monthly in-house training and at the end of the year a certificate is awarded. At the same time, recruits attend workshops organised by the PNG Media Council or other training providers. Training covers the basics of reporting on important current issues. The sessions are scheduled for Saturday mornings so there is no undue work pressure on the journalists and the guest speaker.

At FM100 training is done mostly within the first six months of the journalist joining the company. The Editor conducts this. For the first month the focus is on getting the journalist accustomed to writing news for radio, then the journalist is introduced to the audio equipment and how to operate it. By the sixth month the journalist is able to work with the system and can produce programs.

The President of the Media Council said journalism standards could be increased through ongoing journalism training, especially in investigative journalism and enforcing the code of ethics.

The Media for Development Initiative

A major new media project based in PNG will address a number of the issues raised above in the sections on the media. The AusAID-funded Media for Development Initiative (MDI) is a five-year initiative to support an open and democratic media in PNG that was launched in January 2005. It aims to increase the provision of quality media services to contribute to PNG's stability and prosperity.

The MDI has two components. The first is a program jointly overseen by the PNG Media Council, the PNG government and AusAID and implemented through the PNG Media Council to build the capacity of the media sector by helping to address issues of diversity of access and content. Media-related organisations and NGOs will be encouraged to submit proposals for projects in four target areas:

- Program content. Making high-quality program content available to media networks and community groups at low cost will address the limited number of programs devoted to development issues that affect Papua New Guineans. This will include features in high-priority areas such as health, HIV/AIDS, education, agriculture, law and justice, and governance. Within this activity, a media exchange system to facilitate the sharing of media resources will also be established.
- Rural networks. Building a rural network of civil society, media and government agencies that can collaborate will improve rural people's access to the media. This will link existing rural organisations and individuals already responding creatively to the information needs of rural communities.
- Media research and analysis. Providing practical, accurate and useful means of assessing media operations and performance will contribute to public policy development for PNG. By funding research and reports this will address issues of lack of data and analysis of media

effectiveness and reach. This may include publishing a 'state of the media' report and a survey of media freedom.

- Training and development. Increasing knowledge, skills and understanding of media personnel in government, civil society and the media industry will support a number of media-related learning and development projects. This will also use the talents of the existing, very competent people working in the PNG media.

The second component of the MDI aims to strengthen the effectiveness of the NBC through a partnership with the ABC. This partnership will include assistance with organisational development, improving program content, including a new radio drama series, strengthening the rural broadcasting network and digitising the NBC archive to preserve PNG's important cultural heritage. This will increase the NBC's capacity to fulfil its role as PNG's key provider of quality information to all people and as a national voice for their views and aspirations.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

All the media surveyed follow the PNG Media Council's General Code of Ethics for the News Media. The Council also has a Broadcasting Code of Practice and Codes of Ethics and Practice for Advertisements. In addition to this *Wantok* has its own employee handbook to guide the journalists in their daily work; the *Post-Courier* has an in-house code of conduct that applies to all the staff, including journalists, and the NBC has its own editorial policy and legislation, the *Broadcasting Act*, which is described in Section 1.6, Public Service Broadcasting.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

The PNG Media Council was established in 1995 to replace the defunct Press Council of Papua New Guinea, which had been set up in 1985. The core function of the council is to ensure that section 46 of the Constitution, Freedom of Expression, which extends to every person, citizen or otherwise, is upheld at all times. The three main objectives of the Media Council are:

- *To strengthen and support the industry, to promote its viability and protect against government interference in the media;*
- *To provide training to journalists and editors;*
- *To fulfil a social obligation role, with emphasis on fighting high level corruption.*²⁶

All the mainstream media organisations in PNG are members of the Council and provide it with an annual income of K20,000. Each full member pays K2500 while the associate members pay K1500. The President of the Media Council said:

The Council will serve its members more effectively by employing one full time technical support person and a part time secretary to build up a credible data base of all of the Council's training programs, activities and update members; act as the clearinghouse of all matters relating to the media in Papua New Guinea; produce local resource materials for training and take a more proactive role in education/awareness of the importance of a free media in Papua New Guinea.

Each member organisation is responsible for ensuring that they operate within the guidelines set out in the code of ethics. The PNG Media Council has two full-time staff, consisting of one administrative officer and an administrative assistant responsible for secretarial work.

In addition to the Training Committee, the Council has an Advertising Manager's Committee, which drafts marketing strategies for the industry-wide social awareness campaigns dealing with issues like HIV/AIDS and the Limited Preferential Voting System.

Seed money was provided by the British High Commission and the Media Council to establish the Independent Media Standards Committee (IMSC) to oversee the codes of ethics.

The objectives of the IMSC are:

- *To maintain the character of the media in Papua New Guinea in accordance with the highest standards according to the Media Council of Papua New Guinea Code of Ethics, Advertising & Broadcast Policy, and to preserve the established freedom of the media in Papua New Guinea*
- *To consider, investigate, and deal with complaints about publications of the media*
- *To issue findings on complaints which are brought before the Standards Committee*

- To watch for and comment on developments likely to degrade media standards or restrict freedom of the Media in Papua New Guinea
- To make representations concerning Media Standards on appropriate occasions to governments, public inquiries and other organisations in Papua New Guinea and abroad
- To publish reports of the Standards Committee's work and to exchange information with other similar bodies.²⁷

The IMSC consists of five members, representing the legal sector and academia, women, church, business, and civil society. There is no government or media representation on the IMSC. A letter of complaint is sent to the Council Secretariat, which then refers the matter to the media organisation concerned. The media organisation has 14 days to respond or else the matter is referred to the IMSC for adjudication. If the media is found to be in the wrong, then the media organisation has to make a written statement to that effect in the media.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

The media organisations in PNG are considered to be some of the most advanced in the region in terms of training, level of reporting, presentation of the news in both print and electronic media and understanding of the issues of governance.

Most of the journalists are graduates from DWU or UPNG, with the few over 45 years having been trained under a cadetship program. There is no union for the journalists, thus there is no grading or a uniform pay scale.²⁸ The pay scale is between K5000 and K7000 per annum for cadets, and K30,000-plus for senior journalists. This is still below the public service pay scale, which is an incentive for journalists to leave the mainstream media for a public relations job in a government department.

Ongoing training in the workplace is not a priority for most of the media as they cannot afford to create a position for a full-time trainer. The *Post-Courier* is the exception as it has a fully developed training program established by News Limited and its own dedicated training room. All the media benefit from the training workshops organised by the Media Council's Training Committee.

Making training available is one thing, but quality outcomes from the training are not possible if the newsroom managers do not encourage the journalists. Journalists attending investigative workshops should be encouraged to use the internet and search for background or additional information. However, past abuse of internet access has restricted the use of this facility. Access to basic resources also often hinders the work of journalists, and stringers in the provinces and the NBC journalists have been very vocal about it.

The link between the media and NGOs could be further strengthened if there was better understanding of NGOs and how the media can work with them in covering governance issues. Two media organisations said they give the NGOs a wide berth because the NGOs have their own agenda to push.²⁹ In comparison, the working relationship with government appears to be more effective.

The NBC through Karai national radio can reach more people. However, the programming needs an overhaul so it can more effectively attract and engage a range of listeners. The NBC also needs to advertise its broadcast schedule in the print media. In places like Port Moresby the listeners have access to cable television as well as the commercial radio stations, and may not listen to the interesting programs on Karai. However, the NBC, like the other media organisations, has not carried out a listener survey for many years.

Suggested strategies:

- Include research methods and skills in all training workshops for journalists to strengthen investigative journalism capacity. Ensure that journalists are given the time necessary to develop investigative stories on good governance issues.
- Newsrooms to purchase CDs of the revised laws of PNG, the Constitution and other resources for journalists. These resources should also be available to provincial journalists.
- Produce resources and handbooks from training workshops to help journalists on return to newsrooms.
- Include newsroom management courses in training programs so that managers share their experiences in managing bureaus.

- Continue short training courses for journalists, with regular follow-up courses and monitoring of news produced to see if journalists are implementing what they have learned.
- Improve capacity, including resources for provincial journalists to contribute meaningfully to the news agenda.
- Make better use of the growing pool of unemployed media graduates or former employees of mainstream media who have returned to their home provinces. Together with provincial stringers and NGOs, they could be a source of interesting features and programs from the provinces. The NBC journalist who may not be as productive when the station is off the air could also contribute to what may be the development of a rural news agency for PNG.³⁰
- Invite NGOs to work as partners in informing the nation of developments in rural communities.
- Include NGOs producing media content on governance issues in provincial media workshops.
- Conduct a nationwide media survey covering all media. This survey could be used as a tool in involving the media in nation building and a source to draw from when formulating a national information and communication policy.
- Invite the public to recommend a nominee for the media governance award in the annual media awards.

Community radio

Non-commercial community radio stations have increased over the last three years. Most of them are run by the churches and special interest groups like the mining companies to entertain and inform communities living in remote areas. Community radio stations are another means to disseminate information on development issues and to increase media coverage in local languages in rural areas. However, currently the programming is mostly music-based and in the case of the churches a lot of imported material is rebroadcast.

Suggested strategies:

- The PNG Media Council to encourage community radio development as a way of increasing the diversity of viewpoints expressed via the media.
- The Media Council to consider establishing a community radio committee to focus specifically on issues related to this media sector, its development and sustainability.
- Encourage community radio stations to broadcast programs produced by NGOs and community groups.
- Include community radio in media training programs.
- Publish community media broadcasting schedules in print media for better public exposure.
- Recognise achievements of community radio in the annual media awards.

Training institutions

Suggested strategies:

- Introduce a program on governance at UPNG (School of Humanities) or DWU (PNG Studies) and include as a compulsory requirement for journalism majors.
- Introduce an undergraduate program in media and governance to the UPNG annual Lahara Sessions (summer courses) at the end of the school year.
- The Media Council and/or the DSEI Information and Communication division to engage UPNG and DWU or another tertiary institution to carry out random media surveys as a means of building up research literature on PNG media.
- Encourage students to carry out serious research on an aspect of media and publish this to build up a body of research findings on PNG media.
- UPNG and DWU to update their websites regularly to ensure that prospective students in PNG and in other countries can access up-to-date information on journalism and communications courses.
- Invite the public to recommend a nominee for the media governance award in the annual media awards.

PNG Media Council

Suggested strategies:

- The government to allocate an annual grant to support the Media Council's training program and train senior journalists to facilitate training workshops.
- Establish a database of journalism and media resources. As more young journalists enter the workforce and the older generation retire or move away from the mainstream media, valuable information and resources are being lost through lack of a central storage and retrieval system.
- Revisit the Editors' Taskforce, especially to encourage input from provincial stringers and full-time journalists on issues of governance.³¹
- The Media Council to take the lead in encouraging the government to address the shortcomings of media industry legislation and monitoring procedures, and the absence of a national communications policy. Knee-jerk reactions to threats from the government should be things of the past.
- The Media Council or its delegated representative to sit on any committee established to formulate a national communication and information policy.
- Publicise the Council membership drive so that government officers can subscribe and benefit from training workshops.
- Establish a separate office space for the Council's secretariat to cope with the increasing workload and to improve access by the media.
- Publish a regular Media Council newsletter for distribution to members and the public as an insert in daily newspapers.
- The Advertising Manager's Committee to consider making a distinction between information media and entertainment media (over 80 per cent of content) so as to enable an equitable distribution of revenue. The concern is that a major portion of the budget is being taken up by high production costs for radio and television advertisements, thus disadvantaging a weekly newspaper in Tok Pisin or a provincial radio station that broadcasts in the local language.
- Update the Media Council's website regularly.
- Introduce a governance award for the best and most consistent NGO and government media in the Media Council's annual awards.
- The Media Council continues the regular breakfast meetings as a venue for the media and business community to meet visiting VIPs or listen to an address by newsmakers, including politicians.

The Independent Media Standards Committee

Suggested strategies:

- The IMSC to publicise its work and contact address in all media so that the public is more aware of its existence and its role.
- The Media Council to source funding to enable the IMSC to effectively carry out its work.
- Seek funding from AusAID for regular contact with the Australian Press Council (APC) and/or other relevant bodies so that the IMSC can consult on IMSC member roles and the function of the IMSC.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR**3.1 Government sector media capacity**

There is a Media Unit in the Prime Minister's office. The Director is available to the media 24 hours a day as first point of contact to access the Prime Minister or other senior government ministers.

The Information and Communication division of DESI is responsible for coordinating information from the government ministries for various media and producing a monthly newspaper.

There are 26 national ministries. Some of them may have a press officer, while others prefer to have the Minister or the Department Secretary answer questions from the media. In addition to the Prime Minister's Media Unit, the following government ministries, departments and statutory

authorities produce regular media content: the ministries of Health, Justice and Attorney-General, Correctional Services, Agriculture and Livestock, Lands and Physical Planning, and Works; the Department of Personnel Management (Ministry of Public Services); the Department of Police (Ministry of Internal Security); and the DSEI; the Law and Justice Sector Program (LJSP);³² PNGFA; the Electoral Commission; the TPA; the NFA; the NACS; and the Ombudsman's Commission.

The statutory organisations may have positions for one press officer or, in bigger institutions, a separate publications unit. Many of the press or media officers are graduates of the journalism program at UPNG or DWU.

Of the 19 provincial governments and the National Capital District Commission (NCDC), the NCDC is the most effective in putting out media content in the print media and for television. These programs are News from the City Hall, broadcast on EMTV at 7 pm Saturdays, and the weekly NCDC News in the daily newspapers. There are three officers employed in the NCDC media unit.

Some of the 19 provincial governments and governors have a press officer. For example, the Governor of Central Province has a press officer who is very active in promoting activities in the province. Press releases come from the Office of the Governor or he may delegate the responsibility to the Provincial Administrator. There are also some active publications units in the provinces that publish a newsletter for the provincial government and handle media-related matters.

Human resources

There are four officers working in the Prime Minister's Media Unit. Two are permanent positions, a director and a press officer, one press officer is on secondment from the Constitutional Development Commission and another is a political appointment. The annual budget is K300,000. However, if there is a shortfall, money is available from another vote within the PM's office.

The Minister for Inter-Government Relations has a press officer and the Minister for National Planning and Rural Development used to have one. Other government ministers may not see a press officer's position as a priority, while some government and Opposition members employ senior journalists to write their statements.

TPA has one officer for public relations and six officers employed in the Marketing Division, whose job is to sell PNG's image to potential travellers.

PNGFA has one press officer in the Port Moresby office, and there is one person based at the Forest Research Institute in Lae who is responsible for its media publicity.

LJSP has one media and public information adviser. He writes news stories and takes the photographs.

DSEI advertised ten positions within the Information and Communication division in October 2004. Two deputy secretaries have been appointed – one for information and the other for policy. The applications for the rest of the positions are awaiting approval from the Department of Personnel Management. Current duties include maintenance of the government website, production of the monthly government newspaper, *Gavamani Sivarai*, coordinating government speakers for the weekly NBC government talkback program and ongoing research for the national information and communication policy.

The Information, Education and Communication (IEC) section within NACS has one national adviser, one AusAID counterpart, one resource centre manager and one information officer.

The NFA has one officer, who is reportedly under a lot of strain from the workload.

The National Agricultural Institute (NARI) has employed a full-time press officer, which has lightened the workload for the Public Relations Officer in Agriculture and Livestock. Prior to that, the Public Relations Officer was also responsible for promoting the work of NARI in the mass media.

The Media Unit in the Ministry of Health has eight officers, the head of the unit, a journalist (print media), two journalists (radio), two video producers, a desktop publishing officer and an illustrator.

Correctional Services has one press officer who produces a newsletter and press releases, and liaises with the media.

The growing number of public relations and/or press officers employed by government departments and statutory organisations indicates an interest by government to improve their public relations and promote the various departments' contribution to national development.

The most regular government producers of media content are the ministries of Agriculture and Livestock, Health, and Education, the LJP, the NFA, the TPA and NACS. The most consistently productive media content is produced by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. Of the statutory authorities, NACS is considered the most effective media producer, but it is heavily dependent on donor funding for media awareness. These departments and agencies are included in the survey, along with the Prime Minister's Media Unit.

3.2 Government media processes

The Prime Minister's Media Unit is the first point of contact for journalists, due to the availability of the staff and the efficient manner in which the queries are handled. The main task of the unit is to get media coverage of the Prime Minister's activities from the print media and radio. Port Moresby-based journalists are also given the opportunity to travel with the Prime Minister's team to the provinces. The unit also acts as a conduit for accessing responses from other senior ministers where no direct contact is possible. There are plans to build a studio with a direct line to the NBC for the Prime Minister's radio appearances. The NBC could use this opportunity to generate news for the rest of the media to feed off.

However, as noted earlier, in Section 2.12, Media Access to Government Content, the government website is considered unreliable, as it is out of date, pages are still under construction and it is slow to navigate.

3.3 Government department media content

The Prime Minister's Media Unit arranges press conferences or individual question and answer sessions after the NEC Wednesday meetings. General news press releases are given out as the need arises and controversial issues are addressed through press conferences if more than one media approaches the unit for comment from the Prime Minister. Speeches made at public functions are sent out to the media as a potential source for news stories or feature articles and, when Parliament is in session, it is common for government ministers to hold a press conference in Parliament. The unit also sends photographs and television footage to the media. Information from the Prime Minister's Media Unit is in English. There is a website also that includes the press releases and statements from the Prime Minister.

DSEI's Information and Communication division coordinates the production of the government talkback program on the NBC. Each week a government ministry is featured, speaking on topics such as education, activities of the Ombudsman's Commission, new government policies, budget analysis, environmental laws, law and order, and issues related to land ownership. As noted earlier, the office also produces the 12-page monthly *Gavamani Sivarai*, which is inserted in the *Wantok* and the *National*.

The Agriculture and Livestock Public Relations Officer handles public relations aspects of the Ministry, writes news and feature stories for print and radio, including the *Post-Courier's* 'Rural Industry News'. He also contributes to the Ministry's quarterly news magazine *Didimag* (circulation 400 copies), alerts the media to interesting projects and compiles material for publication in the *Gavamani Sivarai*. The Department also has a technical branch that produces booklets, research findings and other technical and policy matters relating to agriculture. The policy division is responsible for writing and cross-checking any press release or ministerial or departmental statement on agriculture and livestock. Information disseminated to the media is in English. The Public Relations Officer does not have time to translate the articles into Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu.

The Media Unit in the Ministry of Health produces a weekly radio program on the NBC's Karai radio service, a weekly newspaper column in the *National*, press releases and press conferences as required and community video programs, and provides footage to EMTV for its news. The major focus is the National Health Plan and issues related to priority health areas such as safe motherhood, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), malaria, tuberculosis, infant mortality and the parasitic disease filariasis.

The LJP's Media and Public Information Adviser produces news and feature articles on law and order, community initiatives to achieve just and peaceful communities, alternative dispute resolution and prison rehabilitation projects, as well as producing a quarterly publication, *Law and Justice Sector News*, with a current print run of 3000 copies. The language used is English. There is no exclusive radio program. LJP participates in the government radio talkback program broadcast on the NBC Karai national service on Monday from 8.10 pm to 10 pm.

The TPA Public Relations Officer produces public relations feature articles and responses from the Minister and CEO on questions regarding policy or controversial issues.

PNGFA's Press Officer compiles press releases, feature stories and photographs on work carried out by the PNGFA for dissemination to all the media. These stories are usually from field trips to the provinces. The officer is also responsible for producing an in-house newsletter and compiling articles for the *Gavamani Sivarai*.

All statements for the Minister for Forestry or the PNGFA's Secretary are written by the technical staff in the policy branch or, in the case of the Minister, his Research Officer or First Secretary, and run by the Department Secretary before being released to the media, usually in English.

NFA produces press releases depending on the need and the newsletter *Fishing Lines* every two months, with a print run of 700. Media content focuses on government's policy on fishing. Material is also produced for *Gavamani Sivarai*. All information is produced in English.

NACS produces posters, pamphlets, video programs, press releases, a 20-minute weekly radio program on Karai radio, community theatre and quarterly newsletters. The media content is in English, Tok Pisin and, to a lesser extent, Hiri Motu.

3.4 Media governance priorities

The Director of the Prime Minister's Media Unit said the priority for government is political stability, followed by export-driven policy, which is linked to creating employment and encouraging people to work their land. HIV/AIDS and law and order are also major concerns.

DSEI's mandate is to strengthen public awareness and campaign for the government through disseminating development information on government policy and the activities of the government departments. This information is published or broadcast on a regular basis on radio and in newspapers. The weekly talkback program on NBC is to encourage public debate and community participation on various governance issues.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock promotes the theme 'Food Security, Our Security', and stories on improving yield, especially the introduction of new crops, and sustainable food production are also being promoted in the media.

The priorities for the Ministry of Health are management of the daily health news agenda to advocate for improved health resources, especially in rural and remote areas, and dissemination of information on major diseases and disease prevention.

The LJSP goal is to achieve a 'Just and Safe and Secure Society for All'. Priority governance issues for media content are criminal justice and restorative justice in the communities. The Media and Public Information Adviser said:

We have to tell the people what the government is doing to restore law and order in the community. In our work, promoting the concept of restorative justice is a major factor in creating peaceful communities. We have to instil values and revisit our cultural values of respect and caring for our neighbours.

For the TPA, tourism development, promotion and industry news are priorities.

The PNGFA said that, as the priority for government is support for an export-driven economy, it was important for funds and resources to be used to improve roads and create opportunities for rural communities to participate. However, lack of government services often makes it difficult for the rural population to benefit. The Press Officer said, 'Decision makers in Port Moresby must be fair when dealing with the local resource owners and educate these people to use their resource wisely.'

The NFA priority is the management of PNG fisheries for maximum sustainable benefit for the people of PNG. The PNG fisheries zone of 2.4 million sq km is the largest in the South Pacific.

The objectives of the National AIDS Council are as follows:

- Facilitate a multi-sectoral response to contain the AIDS epidemic in the country;
- Organise a mechanism to minimise personal, social and economic impact of HIV and AIDS in Papua New Guinea;
- Ensure personal privacy, dignity and integrity is maintained in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the country.³³

3.5

Target audiences

The PM's Media Unit targets other line departments and the public at large. The Unit monitors the effectiveness of its press releases and other government-produced media content through letters to the editor in newspapers, talkback programs on radio, and noting where press releases are placed in newspapers and broadcast news.

DSEI produces content for government departments and the PNG public.

Agriculture's target audiences are the media, other government agencies and the rural population of PNG, who are mainly subsistence farmers.

Health targets policy makers through engagement with the daily news agenda and the whole population, with specific health information campaigns targeting certain segments and medical staff.

LJSP's target audience is the population of PNG, the media and key stakeholders, including the departments of Correctional Services, Police, and Justice and Attorney-General, as well as magisterial services, national judicial staff services and the Ombudsman's Commission.

TPA targets the PNG population and local and international organisations involved in tourism and the hospitality industry.

PNGFA targets the people of PNG, especially those who depend on the forest for their survival, as well as other government departments.

NFA targets the PNG population, the business sector involved in fishing and marine enterprises, and government departments.

NACS produces content for the general population of PNG, from young adults to sexually active men and women.

Most of the departments did not respond to the question of how they monitored the effectiveness of their media content. It is likely that this is because there are no established monitoring mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of media content produced.³⁴ This is an issue in all the 14 countries surveyed, not just PNG.

3.6

Qualifications and training

The Prime Minister's Media Unit requires a diploma in journalism as the minimum level of education for recruitment. However, the Prime Minister's office would prefer to only employ university degree holders and priority is given to those with postgraduate qualifications. The Media Unit is affiliated to the PNG Media Council and occasionally the press officers are invited to attend training workshops.

There is no media awareness training available for parliamentarians. Those with media experience are seasoned parliamentarians. In the past some media houses invited parliamentarians to visit their offices to brief them on their media operations. The Prime Minister is a former NBC radio journalist.

The positions in DSEI require a diploma or degree in journalism or communication and experience in the media industry. The Acting Secretary has a postgraduate degree in communication, while the other information officers have diplomas from UPNG. The three information officers interviewed said they would like further training on the use of publishing software and digital cameras.

Agriculture's basic requirement is a diploma or degree in journalism and some experience working in the media. The Public Relations Officer joined the department 15 years ago when the Public Service Higher Certificate was required. This is no longer a requirement. The current officer does not have any formal qualifications but he trained on the job under the *Post-Courier's* cadetship scheme after leaving school at Grade 12 matriculation level. The Public Relations Officer said training was required to improve photographic quality and usage of software to enhance the quality for publication.

The Head of the Ministry of Health's Media Unit has a journalism qualification from UPNG; the print journalist has part completed a journalism diploma at DWU; one of the radio journalists has just completed a degree in journalism at DWU, and one video officer has a diploma in visual arts from UPNG.

In 2002–03 an AusAID-funded project focused on upgrading the Media Unit's human and technical resources, increasing the flow and quality of information to the unit from the rest of the Health Ministry, and setting up a more effective working relationship with the media.

LJSP's Media and Public Information Adviser must have a diploma or degree in journalism or communication arts. The current Adviser said there is a need for further training in understanding the roles of the different stakeholders so that the Public Relations Officer can write confidently about them.³⁵ When organising workshops for the media on law and justice issues, the Adviser liaises with the PNG Media Council to invite journalists to attend, and outsources the training and facilitator jobs to senior PNG journalists.

TPA's Public Relations Officer must have a diploma or degree in journalism and some experience working in the media industry. The current Public Relations Officer has a diploma in journalism from UPNG and five years experience with the *Post-Courier* and the *National*.

PNGFA requires a diploma or degree in journalism or communication arts and experience as a journalist in the media industry. The Press Officer has a diploma in journalism from DWU. The officer plans to do a short course at DWU on the use of video cameras so she could use the one in the office. The Press Officer added that further training in the use of computer software for publishing, and editing video and radio programs is required.

NFA listed a diploma or degree in journalism or communication arts and some years work experience as a requirement. The Public Relations Officer holds a diploma in journalism from UPNG. The NFA said work pressure is such that there is no time to attend additional skills training courses.³⁶

NACS has a media training program in place for its officers but did not provide details. In order to benefit from the programs offered by the Media Council it has to pay an affiliation fee of K1500. The Information Officer said NACS needed more training on web design and updating of the website.

3.7 Equipment

The Prime Minister's Media Unit has computers with internet access, digital and television cameras, and telephones. However, telephone access suffers from telecommunications problems in the provinces and outer islands. This makes it hard to send stories to NBC's provincial stations.

The Director of the Unit said the equipment was adequate for current needs. As noted, the unit is exploring setting up a mini radio studio in the office to send the Prime Minister's news conferences to the NBC. The Unit is also looking at ways to improve the delivery of television footage to EMTV. At present the Director said they give the film to the Port Moresby-bound Air Niugini flight and 'hope that it will be picked up in time for EMTV's 6 pm news'.

DSEI has office telephones, computers, scanner and fax, and email access had just become available, which was expected to make it easier to communicate with the media and other government departments.

The Ministry of Agriculture has a computer, digital camera, phone and fax, and recent internet access had made the task of sending out stories, notices and photographs much easier and faster. Before this the Public Relations Officer relied on the fax or hand delivered articles to the newsrooms.

At the Media Unit, Ministry of Health each officer has access to a computer and the internet. The Media Unit has digital radio and video production equipment. Telephone access to the provinces can be difficult if the NDoH's phone bill is outstanding.³⁷

LJSP has a laptop computer, internet access, mobile phone, office phone, digital camera and video camera. The newsletter is produced in-house. For radio programs the NBC studio and staff are used. The digital camera and computer software is said to be adequate for present needs.

TPA has a computer, laptop, mobile phone, camera, digital camera and internet access.

PNGFA has a computer, internet access, digital camera, fax, email and telephone. The Press Officer said the equipment is very useful as 'it makes a big difference when you know that you will be getting the stories and pictures to the media immediately'.

NFA has a computer, two cameras, including one digital, telephone, internet access and layout software (QuarkXpress) for the newsletter. The equipment was described as adequate for current needs.

NACS has telephones, computer, internet and a digital camera. The radio program is produced at the NBC and video footage is outsourced to media agencies. NACS said the equipment is not adequate. It needs more staff and equipment to record broadcast-quality material for radio.

Other government departments would have access to computers, the internet and digital cameras, and telephone access to the provinces. Telephone access to the rural areas and outer islands depends on the availability in those areas.

3.8 Government-media relationships

The Director of the Prime Minister's Media Unit said the media is not always able to cover events and this is why it is important to have basic background information available to send to the media. He added that there is also an urgent need to monitor all news reports, government statements and policy directions that the media carries, and for clear directions to be given and carried out by all concerned parties.

As noted, DSEI's relationship with the media will be strengthened further now the department has email access. However, it would like to see the local media publicise the talkback program carried by NBC and use it as a source for news features. The Acting Secretary said the division's ongoing work on the national information and communication policy is nearly ready for critique from media organisations and other stakeholders.

Agriculture has good relations with the media, and the print media makes good use of its articles and photos. This is published free of charge, as is the information provided to the NBC. The Public Relations Officer gives information to the NBC (Karai radio) for two programs, Man on the Land and Rural Forum. When he approached EMTV a couple of years ago to run a special documentary from Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to celebrate World Food Day, he was told the fee would be K300 per minute, which was the commercial rate then. The Public Relations Officer felt more stories need to be reported from the rural areas, especially on the work of extension services. Provincial journalists could be better trained to report on the developments in various fields of agriculture in the community.

The Ministry of Health has good relations with the media, and this depends on both the media unit officers and the journalists making an effort to stay in regular contact. Print media and the FM radio stations generally make good use of items, articles and photos when they are supplied. A paid program is supplied weekly to the NBC (Karai radio) and other programs, including talkback, are supplied as part of the package. EMTV is less receptive than the other outlets.

LJSP's feature stories are treated as news features and run free of charge. The only items paid for are advertisements. LJSP has just finished running an advertisement promoting the Law and Justice Sector campaign on EMTV for two weeks. It cost K18,000 for production costs and an additional K18,000 for the 10 second-advertisements over the two-week period. The Media and Public Information Adviser said, 'The government must use the Media Council's existing programs, training the media to understand how the government works. We are working with them in this area.' He added that the media should report fairly and be accurate and impartial. He felt the media need to step back at times and be seen as a development partner with the government agencies, 'instead of being a critic all the time'.

TPA's Press Officer said the media needs to follow up information and carry features on what is available for the tourists in the provinces.

PNGFA's Press Officer said the Authority works closely with the media to report and promote issues of concern to the ordinary citizens of the country. He added that the media make good use of the material that is given to them. Questions of a controversial nature or on policy matters are referred to the Department Secretary as per standard procedure. The Press Officer said that journalists 'must be familiar with the background of issues they are covering', adding, 'A well-researched article would go a long way in building respect for the journalist and credibility for the media organisation.' He felt too much time and space is given to trivial news from Port Moresby.

The NFA Public Relations Officer said that it has a good relationship with the media, which it hopes to continue.

The NACS Information Officer would like to see a closer working relationship with the media. NBC radio is always responsive to its media content, followed by the *Post-Courier*. 'We have to work harder on the other media organisations.'

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

Legislation and regulation

The failure of successive governments in formulating or implementing a comprehensive national communication policy has meant that the commercial media industry has had to operate and develop without guidelines. This inaction by governments has resulted in a breakdown in the monitoring and regulatory process. An informed public debate on the lack of government media policy has not been organised since the last two major initiatives to make the media accountable, the 1987 Mass Media Tribunal Bill and the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC)'s 1995 push for media accountability.

One of the recommendations of the CRC was

That all existing legislation which impact on the media for example, the Newspaper and Printers Act, Radio Telecommunications Act, are to be reviewed and, where necessary, amended.³⁸

The process of privatisation and new legislation has also indirectly impacted on the mass media. Functions that were once the sole responsibility of one government agency have been fragmented and allocated to two or even three agencies. The government-owned NBC and its many challenges are discussed briefly in Section 2.19, Radio and Television Program Formats.

As noted earlier, the DSEI was established to take care of the privatisation of state-owned enterprises. However, the attention of the Department has been focused on the sale of Telikom PNG and other state enterprises, and priority does not appear to have been given to the urgent need to develop and implement a comprehensive information and communication policy, including a review of the now-outdated NPIC.

Suggested strategies:

- Create an Information and Communication Authority to oversee the development and administration of legislation. The privatisation of state enterprises and the new legislation have highlighted the urgent need to implement a national communication policy. This policy needs to address the serious media and communications disparity between major urban areas and rural areas, where the majority of the population live.
- Conduct a nationwide media survey. The survey could be designed to find out how the public access information, what newspapers they read, what programs they listen to on the radio and, if they have television, what program or stations they watch. The results of this survey should be taken into account when formulating the new communication policy.³⁹
- Encourage more PNG media ownership and development, with legislation on cross-ownership to increase ownership diversity, rather than a monopoly. Seek ways to reduce the costs, imposed by government and/or government corporations and private companies that form an effective barrier against new media entrants. These include air freight costs for the distribution of print media, and the high costs of telecommunications and of internet access.
- Reconsider previous recommendations by the CRC, which encouraged Papua New Guinean equity in the print media industry, with government assistance and support.
- Amend the outdated *Television (Prohibition and Control) Act 1986*. That legislation was rushed through to prevent Niugini Television Network (NTN)⁴⁰ and Media Niugini (EMTV) from broadcasting until the government completed a public inquiry into broadcasting (including television) and published its findings.⁴¹ There is no provision made to administer the Television Act, the registration of television stations or guidelines for the standard of television broadcasting. The Kalo Inquiry recommended that the government establish a Broadcasting Tribunal and that program regulation be one of its functions.
- Explore ways to enforce the conditions in radio communications licences for local content and community service obligations.
- As part of the community service obligation, encourage provincial NGOs and other interest groups to produce broadcast-quality development documentary material for radio and television.
- Utilise innovations in the publishing industry, which have made it possible for one person to compile a 12-page monthly newspaper, to produce *Gavamani Sivarai*, thus freeing up officers for other work, including regularly updating the government website.

- DSEI's Information and Communication division to liaise with the Media Council to conduct workshops for members of Parliament in media awareness and how the media can work with them to achieve good governance priorities.
- Establish a link between the Information and Communication division in Port Moresby and the provincial government liaison officers. This will broaden the content of *Gavamani Sivarai* to include development stories from the provinces. Many of the provinces are still using electric typewriters and the provincial governments may not see partnership with the media as a priority, as they have the local NBC station, which they think they control.

Government media capacity strategies

- Press statements from each department or its minister are written by the secretary of the department and checked by technical and policy officers before being released to the public. The implication here is that the media officers are employed to concentrate on public relations, while writing press releases or major policy statements is handled by the secretary and technical officers. Some media officers are happy to go along with this while others feel that understanding their department's policy and being encouraged to try their hand in writing statements will give them confidence in their role as the link between the media and their department.
- Provide government media officers with a detailed induction on their department's role and function and their responsibilities in relation to the media.
- The PNG Media Council to organise a series of familiarisation workshops for politicians and department heads. Politicians need to understand how the mainstream media function and how best they can utilise the media to publicise governance issues that come under their portfolio.
- Improve storage of information and establish an easy retrieval system; few government departments have the capacity to handle this. Not all government departments have current information with regular updates on the government website, thus basic information is not readily available.
- Improve internet and email access; while further training in the use of modern technology and equipment can enhance wider dissemination of material, some offices have limited access to the internet.⁴²
- Encourage the Prime Minister and senior ministers to use the NBC to discuss issues of national importance and invite the other media to cover the events.
- The Prime Minister's Media Unit to disseminate press statements in Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu so that the media using those languages are included.
- The Prime Minister's office to issue a clear directive on the placement of government advertisements in the media to cut out the discriminatory practice of using the English language only, while the Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu sections of the community miss out on vital information.
- PNG Media Council to send advance reminders to government for the annual membership drive to enable departments to budget for the membership fee. Being members of the Council would allow their officers to attend the in-country training organised by the PNG Media Council.
- Invite government media officers to the annual media awards to strengthen the relationship between the media and the government officers, many of whom have worked in the mainstream media before leaving to work for the government.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

No official list of registered NGOs is available. The National Alliance of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) folded in 1997 after some of the members contested the national elections and led the race to form a new government. Drawing on various NGO sources an estimate of active and properly registered mainstream NGOs is around 150, while the 'mushroom NGOs' (NGOs that appear when there is major funding for a project and cease when there is no more funding) are estimated at another 200. There are also many other community-based organisations (CBOs), such as women's fellowships, parish youth groups, and sports and cultural groups. In PNG any

group can claim to be an NGO without being properly registered under the *Associations Act* with the Investment Promotion Authority. The majority of NGOs do not understand how the media operates, and how they can work with this sector.

There are an estimated 15 NGOs that produce some media content on a reasonably regular basis, and they are listed in Section 4.2 below. The NGOs that produce regular media content on governance issues and were interviewed for the survey are the Foundation for Rural Development (FORD) and Health-Education-Livelihood-Participation (HELP) Resources, which are the two most media-active NGOs, and the Community Justice Liaison Unit. The other media-active NGO, the Religious Television Association (RTA), was unavailable for an interview, but a summary of its work is included below.

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

FORD is incorporated as an association with the PNG Investment Promotion Authority. Melpa Media Productions is the business registered by FORD to produce public education, information and media content for both the print and electronic media, focusing on empowering people with information. Areas of interest include community development initiatives, adult education and literacy, environment and conservation, small enterprise development, HIV/AIDS, rural water supply and electrification.

Melpa Media produces a weekly 30-minute radio program on NBC Radio Western Highlands, some television news and current affairs material for EMTV for Tok Piksa and Insait, and a quarterly newsletter, the *Community Development News* (1000 copies).

HELP Resources produces programs for radio (30 minutes fortnightly on NBC Radio East Sepik), press releases for newspapers, articles for regional and international development newsletters and journals, articles for posting on the internet, and videos (with technical expertise sourced from the Family Life Media Unit, Goroka). It also hopes to start a newsletter. HELP is available to provide commentary on local issues for news and current affairs programs on Radio Australia.

The radio program, Radio HELP, focuses on five key issues addressed by the organisation: gender and human rights; sexual health and HIV/AIDS prevention and care; citizen's education for good governance; food security; and sustainable livelihood. HELP also uses the radio program to make the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the organisation known to the public:

Our priorities in the area of governance are to make people think more about what kind of society they want and to make them more aware of the role of citizens, civil society, government, and private enterprise in achieving that. We discourage complacency and encourage active, critical and constructively contributing citizenship — female and male — and the accountability of citizens. We also want the people to understand the constitution and the meaning and practice of human rights. We are against all forms of violence and have a zero tolerance policy towards all forms of violence. The government's agenda is much more political and about point scoring and vote winning. They are failing to teach people the basis of the constitution and human rights, starting with the way people treat each other in families and communities. (Director)

The radio program is in Tok Pisin and sometimes in English. News articles written for the newspapers are in English.

HELP is also developing a multipurpose community telecentre so it can operate as a communication hub and community resource producing information in print, audio, video and online formats.⁴³

The Community Justice Liaison Unit was established in 2003 to work with the CBOs and NGOs involved in addressing law and order problems in the community. It is currently housed in the NGO division at the Department of Social Welfare and Development. It works with 17 NGOs in Port Moresby. The Unit produces pamphlets and has just signed an agreement for a weekly radio program with Radio Wantok Light (Christian radio station). The Head of the Unit said the reason for using this medium is that 'it does not have commercials and is run by a church organisation so people will take more notice'. The unit is also planning to broadcast on the Catholic radio network. Languages used are English, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu. The Community Justice Liaison Unit currently liaises with the media on an ad hoc basis. The Media Adviser, with the LJSP at the Department of National Planning and Rural Development, assists the Unit with this, as it does not have a media officer.

The priority of the Community Justice Liaison Unit is restorative justice in the community. This is in line with the government's National Law and Justice Policy and Plan of Action, formally adopted and endorsed by the NEC in August 2002.

The RTA was founded in February 1993 by the Catholic, Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran Churches of PNG. In July 1994 RTA started producing religious and social programs at the EMTV studios in Port Moresby, as well as contributing news and documentary productions. RTA was officially registered as a company in August 1995. In 1996, with the purchase of its own Avid Media Composer 1000 for linear editing, RTA moved out of the EMTV studio and established its own studio. The aims and goals of the RTA are to: provide religious and development programs for television and electronic media; advise on policy issues relating to religious television; and to create awareness among churches about the potential of television as a tool for religious, cultural and social development. A staff development program sponsors staff for training at DWU. Two staff members have a diploma in management through DWU's Tertiary Distance Education Centre. RTA also manages the homepage of the Catholic Radio Network of PNG and the Solomon Islands.

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) produces a weekly radio program Tok Stret on NBC Karai radio for two hours on Tuesday evening in Tok Pisin, English and Hiri Motu. This program started in 1997 with funding from UNDP. It also runs a weekly Tok Pisin column on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in *Wantok Niuspepa*.

The National Volunteer Service (NVS) publishes a quarterly newsletter, *NVS News*, in English.

TI PNG releases regular press statements on accountability and transparency in government and business. It also publishes a newsletter on its activities and awareness material on good citizenship and the fight against corruption, which are distributed to schools.

The Melanesian Peace Foundation produces regular press releases and invites media to cover workshops on conflict resolution.

World Vision produces publicity materials on its community projects. The most common media content is advertisements for positions vacant or public tenders for service.

The Community Development Scheme (CDS) produces newsletters on community development.

The Community Initiative Scheme (CIS) publishes a regular newsletter on logging and other environmental concerns.

ICRAF produces regular newsletters on law, forestry and individual rights. It also organises workshops and advocacy forums. ICRAF used the media very effectively in its advocacy work on illegal logging practices, human rights abuse and domestic violence until about seven years ago when the leaders decided to move on to form other NGO groups. ICRAF is now getting back on its feet. Recent donor funding has enabled it to reorganise its office and advertise positions.

The Appropriate Technology Foundation (ATF), an NGO in Goroka, publishes a newsletter.

The Environment Law Centre (ELC) publishes a newsletter on forestry matters in PNG and Asia.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

All these NGOs focus on the communities they serve. The exceptions are the international organisations, such as TI, which target the whole PNG public.

FORD targets CBOs and NGOs, churches and some provincial policy and decision makers. FORD requests feedback through its print and electronic media content.

HELP targets the rural grassroots individuals, families and communities; adults, youths, students, women and the poor are particular targets. According to the Director, 'It has turned out that all sectors in the communities in both rural and urban areas are listening to our radio programs.' HELP carries out impact assessment in communities:

We have carried out baseline information surveys and one-to-one interviews to see if they are accessing our services and what access and control they have regarding radio. (Most people cannot access newspapers.) This has shown that people have been listening to our radio programs or have read something about HELP Resources in the newspapers.

The seven months of radio programs has had a significant impact in the publicity of HELP Resources. More communities, youth and women's groups as well as individuals and organisations both government and private, local businessmen, farmers and artefacts carvers are using our telecentre to access markets to export products like vanilla or eagle wood,

the library or to use the internet. We have seen this big change after a series of radio programs. (Director)

The Community Justice Liaison Unit targets the public at large, with an emphasis on young adults, women and families. Since this is a sector program, the other agencies, departments of Police, Correctional Services and Justice, and the Ombudsman's Commission have been encouraged to listen to the programs when they start and to give feedback.

4.4 NGO media capacity

The majority of the local NGOs do not have a media officer. The most senior person would put out press releases and liaise with the media as required. FORD and HELP are exceptions.

FORD has one part-time and two full-time officers working on media production, and a network of stringers in both the print and electronic media. Both full-time officers do journalistic work, and one is an editor and the other a camera operator and producer. Radio and television production are produced in-house and sent to broadcast houses. Stringers assist with news scripts only.

At HELP two officers are involved in media production as part of their other duties. A research, monitoring and evaluation officer is responsible for liaising with media outlets about human resource issues. A radio and advocacy officer spends about 80 per cent of her time on radio program production and training others in radio production skills. Various other project staff, and occasionally the Director, also prepare press releases. In 2004 HELP had a journalist volunteering for three months work experience to assist HELP provide better coverage of its work to the media.

Community Justice currently has one officer liaising with the media. He has not written press releases or held press conferences but promotes the existence of the group through workshops and public forums. The radio program will be produced by Radio Wantok Light and video production is contracted out.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

FORD's recruits must have good basic journalism training and experience in media ethics and exposure to the media industry. They also need an understanding of the needs of the target groups and beneficiaries and of how government policies and priorities affect the target groups and FORD's vision and mission.

HELP said it required a tertiary qualification in journalism and adequate work experience. However, the Director added that HELP has found that Grade 10 school leavers and others can be trained on the job.

If the Community Justice Liaison Unit recruits its own media officer, this person will need a minimum of a diploma in journalism and know how the relevant NGOs operate.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The NGOs interviewed said that ideally NGO officers working in media would have a diploma or degree in journalism and understand the NGO culture. There are a number of trained journalists working in PNG NGOs: Liklik Buk Centre, the Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, World Vision, the CDI Foundation, the Red Cross and the Tertiary Students Fellowship.

FORD's media officers have a degree in journalism and certificates in videography, investigative journalism, basic report writing and photography. The staff are multi-skilled and experienced in both the print and electronic media. FORD said that additional media training priorities are training of trainers for its staff to develop a meaningful stringer network, training in information technology for publishing and production staff, and training for upgraded software programs.

The HELP officer responsible for press releases has a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in social development, with a minor in journalism. The officer producing radio programs has done a short course (TAFE) on community radio in Queensland and a one-month training attachment with Radio Australia's Tok Pisin program. Locally HELP collaborates with a new FM station, and is including the station in its skills training programs. HELP's media training priorities include more staff training in the art of writing press releases, radio production, digital editing and production:

We plan more training from experts who come into PNG and work with us, and to occasionally send our people out. We are particularly keen to promote direct networking and exchange between the new youth radio network and similar networks in other developing countries. (Director)

The Community Justice Liaison Unit is establishing a media network through training workshops with the media organised by the LJSP. The workshops will provide the media with an understanding of the LJSP and what communities are doing to combat law and order problems, and will assist the unit to develop a working relationship with the media. The Head of the Unit said:

There are some NGOs who have former journalists working with them who would know about using the media. However at present there is no solid network between the NGOs and the media. The structure of the boards of NGOs makes it difficult to communicate with the media before running everything by the Chairman before releasing it to the media. The NGOs have to realise that the media can effectively get their message out to the wider community.

The main training priorities identified by these three organisations are training for board members and staff in how the media works, writing press releases and producing newsletters for their organisation.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

FORD has a network of computers using Publisher 2000 for all publishing work and an in-house printer (large print production is outsourced). For television and radio it has digital computer editing and production facilities, and a mobile editing and production unit. For video the demands have increased and there is a need to upgrade and improve the unit's equipment. Radio facilities are adequate and can produce a final product on CD.

HELP has computer and internet access, desktop publishing equipment, digital hand-held recording devices and editing software. Equipment was described as very adequate.

The Community Justice Liaison Unit has access to a computer, internet and telephones.

4.8 NGO media processes

FORD gave the following example of media access costs. The story was on how women are affected in tribal fights in the highlands. It comprised less than 1000 words including interviews. For five minutes on radio, 20 minutes on television and one-third of a page in daily papers with photos the costs were:

- Radio: No cost for broadcast.
- EMTV: K10,000 for broadcast.
- Print dailies: No cost, but edited to quarter page.

However, the charges for media access can vary, and HELP's Director is concerned about the cost of access to the NBC:

The NBC radio station here charges too much, K100 per program broadcast. This is not fair because we are doing a public service, not commercial and because we produce the program ourselves, digitally and give them a CD. They have absolutely no overhead costs in relation to collaborating with us. They should not see us as a way of raising revenue as this is not a good basis for a media relationship/cooperation.

The Director added:

We have a lot to offer the media as we are in direct contact with the people and we are completely independent and objective on the key issues of local governance and development. We try to build relationships with the national and regional newspapers, with writers of regional newsletters, and with local radio [NBC and Life FM, Wewak].

As noted, the Community Justice Liaison Unit has signed a K15,000 agreement for a weekly radio program with Radio Wantok Light.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

FORD is interested in having its own television station and has had discussions with former staff of the ABC, ABC Asia Pacific and Imparja Television in Australia. As a result, staff with experience in training and technical and management support have been employed. FORD is now in the process of putting together a business plan and the next step will be to seek donor funding for a program. The Director said, 'But first, in order to build our capacity and experience in program production, we are planning to secure 30 minutes airtime on EMTV weekly at the cost of K10,000 per week. To us this is ridiculous.'

HELP has explored the feasibility of running its own community radio for years:

But it is a big step. We are interested in the radio in a suitcase idea. Meanwhile the youth we have trained have formed an association — a Sepik digital radio youth network. There are a number of ex-NBC very experienced broadcasters who are keen to work with them. It is early days, so we shall wait to see what happens next. (Director)

4.10 Funding for media content

FORD has received donor funding from the Western Highlands provincial government, UNDP Global Environment Facility Small Grants Program and AusAID. The FORD Director said:

We have produced up to 20 short and long videos for news, current affairs, training, educational and informational videos etc. We are still getting numerous requests to film and produce videos from both local and international development organisations and media organisations. Our TV crew are stringers for Channel 7 and ABC of Australia on a few news materials. Our quarterly newsletter is also funded by donors. Other organisations [NGO, CBO and international development agencies] have requested us to do newspaper supplements.

HELP's Director said:

The core funders, OXFAM/Community Aid Abroad Australia and Bread for the World (Germany) pay salaries, but otherwise the telecentre is self-financing, library is self-financing. Digital radio has seed funding from Global Knowledge Partnerships [GKP]. Desktop publishing is self-financing. Community art and silk screen printing workshop is self funding.

The funding for the Community Justice Liaison Unit is from the LJP (supplied by AusAID).

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

There are many NGOs and CBOs involved in community development work, which covers a wide range of governance issues throughout the country. The international NGOs and their well-resourced staff are able to use the media effectively to promote their work in the communities or to monitor public policy and the actions of the decision makers. The local NGO programs may also be driven by the agenda of the donors, especially in social issues such as HIV/AIDS and family violence, and this can cause some tension with the media. Importantly the NGOs are tuned in to what is happening at the village level. Some of the people who are running these NGOs hold university degrees and have returned to their villages on retirement from the public service or the private sector. This valuable resource can also assist the media by contributing stories, photos and programs on development issues. However, the rate charged by EMTV and the NBC Karai radio service is too high for the NGOs.

For their part, the active NGO media producers feel they could contribute to the news process:

Media in general seem to be reporting more on events in cities [Port Moresby, Lae] and not so much of what is happening in other parts of the country. There are many important programs implemented by NGOs in other parts of PNG which are not reported in newspapers. The NGOs are also well placed to do investigative journalism in their respective local areas. They are usually trusted by the people. Sometimes articles on local development work that we send in to newspapers do not get printed. Maybe not sensational or sexy enough? There could be pages allocated for civil society news and views and the media could make a better effort to have these views shared with the public. (Director, HELP)

Many NGOs do not understand how the mass media operates and which media to use to target audiences effectively. Much of their time is also taken up in running their operations and sourcing funding so that in smaller organisations there is no position for a media person, nor do they see a need to create a position.

Suggested strategies:

- Work with the NGO Capacity Building PNG⁴⁴ and the CDS to train the NGOs in media advocacy and basic news gathering techniques.
- DWU and UPNG to develop and run short courses for the NGOs on media awareness and advocacy, with consideration given to including these modules in the existing PIANGO Graduate Diploma Program in NGO Management.
- Invite active media-producing NGOs to take up membership with the PNG Media Council.
- Include NGOs in the training workshops organised by the Media Council.
- NGOs to liaise with the media to arrange work attachments for NGO officers in media organisations.

- Leading NGOs to establish a PNG NGO website that includes updated information on the NGO sector's work in PNG and a list of existing NGOs and their activities.
- NGO community radio stations to publish their broadcast schedule in the print media.
- The Media Council to include NGOs in its annual media awards.

¹ While this is a high growth rate, other Pacific Island countries such as the Solomon Islands, RMI, Vanuatu and Kiribati also have high growth rates.

² Source: <http://www.adb.org/Documents/CSPs/PNG/2002/csp0200.asp>.

³ Sources for this section: <http://www.dfat.gov.au>; <http://www.pngbd.com/forum/archive>; <http://www.wvfpacific.org.fj/png.htm>; and <http://southpacific.arts.unsw.edu.au/apngfa.png>.

⁴ See http://www.unpo.org/news_detail.php?arg=11&par=34 for further details on the history of Bougainville.

⁵ All currency in this chapter is in Kina. K1.00 equals approximately AU\$0.41.

⁶ See Chapter Two, Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media, for further details.

⁷ See Section 1.5 below for details on local content requirements.

⁸ Peter John Aitsi, President of the PNG Media Council, Government and Media Regulations: 'The Papua New Guinea Experience', paper presented to the Development Research Symposium, Suva, Fiji, October 2003, p. 5.

⁹ See *Broadcasting Commission (Change of Name and Corporate Structure) Act 1995*, section 17, for policy changes.

¹⁰ PNG Media for Development Initiative, Final Design Document, AusAID, 2004, p. 28.

¹¹ See www.catholicpng.org/pg/crn/history.html for a brief history of the network.

¹² Source: <http://www.cdi.org.pg/cdifm.html>.

¹³ UCB Pacific Partners also assisted Christian organisations to set up Gud Nuis Redio in the Solomon Islands, FM 93.1 in Tonga, and 90 Laef FM in Vanuatu.

¹⁴ The Audit Bureau of Circulations, May 2003, reported the *Post-Courier* at 24,935 copies.

¹⁵ See <http://www.rimbunan-hijau-watch.org/> and <http://www.masalai-i-tokaut.com/> for details.

¹⁶ The Audit Bureau of Circulations, May 2003, reported the *National* at 24,687 copies.

¹⁷ The News Director from EMTV was unavailable for interview during the survey period. This coincided with the station being sold to Fiji Television Limited. Information in the survey was provided by the in-country researcher.

¹⁸ This is an issue for a number of the public service broadcasters surveyed.

¹⁹ Since 1987 a Port Moresby-based firm, Marketsearch (owned by HRD-Savi Advertising), has conducted a non-commissioned subscription-based annual media survey of media reception and preferences in PNG. It surveys aspects of press, television, radio and video habits of 1200 Papua New Guineans. It also surveys a small range of additional general consumer habits (such as banking, vehicle ownership and soft drink consumption). Data from this survey is used by commercial media organisations for planning, sales, marketing and sponsorship purposes. The survey is conducted only in five centres nationwide: three major centres (Port Moresby, Lae and Mount Hagen) and two major provincial centres (Rabaul/Kokopo and Madang). It under-samples younger and older people, with the 10–14 years and 50-plus age groups considered of lesser economic importance and therefore under-represented by a factor of 50 per cent compared to their proportion in the population at large (Source: PNG Media for Development Initiative, Final Design Document, 2004, p.100).

²⁰ Source: PNG Media for Development Initiative, Final Design Document, AusAID, 2004, p. 17.

²¹ Of the 42, three journalists and two stringers are based at the Lae office, one journalist is at Mt Hagen, two journalists are in Buka and two in Kokopo, with the rest in Port Moresby.

²² Source: Anna Solomon, lead facilitator, Workshop Report.

²³ One suggested reason for this is that the *Post-Courier* quotation was too high compared to what the *National* and *Wantok* quoted, however, this could not be confirmed.

²⁴ 'PM Call Newspaper Toilet Paper and Wishes Opposition Dead', Pacific Magazine Online, 2 August 2004, <http://www.pacificmagazine.cc/pina/pinadefault2.php?urlpinid=12438>

²⁵ Throughout this chapter, these diplomas and degrees are referred to as a diploma or degree in journalism. The University of Technology in Lae also offers a degree in communication for community development. This could not be included in the survey but warrants further consideration.

²⁶ Source: <http://www.png-simediacouncil.org/page.php?id=500>.

²⁷ Source: <http://www.png-simediacouncil.org/page.php?id=500>.

²⁸ PNG has the highest number of tertiary-qualified journalists, and this is the case across the three media sectors.

²⁹ Ten years ago the environment and unsustainable logging practice topped the agenda of many NGOs and the aggressive full-page advertisements taken out by some of them were close to defamatory statements.

³⁰ The idea of a non-profit independent national news agency was recommended in the National Newspaper Committee Report 1980, p. 6.

³¹ An Editors' Taskforce was established in 2002 to share information regarding corruption. However when the lead person left the *Independent* to work for the government, the Taskforce ceased.

³² This includes government departments and agencies and community organisations involved in law and order.

³³ Source: <http://www.nacs.org.pg/>.

³⁴ The Ministry of Health has conducted some audience research related to specific campaigns, but this is not done on a regular basis.

³⁵ This is a very important issue for all government media officers, who are expected to produce media content on a range of specialist areas in their departments and/or ministries.

³⁶ This was the response from some other government departments and statutory authorities as well.

³⁷ During 2002–03 media officers could not phone outside Port Moresby for this reason.

³⁸ The CRC presented 14 recommendations to Parliament.

³⁹ Audience research will also be one of the components of the PNG MDI.

⁴⁰ NTN only operated from 1987 to 1988, and closed due to financial difficulties.

⁴¹ The Kalo Inquiry into radio and television broadcasting was announced in February 1986 and it presented its findings in January 1987. The Inquiry had 17 terms of reference, visited eight towns and interviewed 1338 people and organisations at public hearings and through written submissions. In all the places the Inquiry visited, it heard concerns raised about the effects of foreign programs on the communities.

⁴² The Acting Secretary of the DSEI is the only one who has direct access to internet, email and other electronically accessible resources, which makes it difficult for media officers responsible for producing the Gavamani Sivarai.

⁴³ Source: PNG Media for Development Initiative, Final Design Document, 2004, p.20.

⁴⁴ This NGO has been established to build capacity across the NGO sector. Its tasks include accelerating the localisation of PIANGO's graduate diploma in NGO management, training and supporting local trainers, providing support for students enrolled in the diploma, and developing skills for NGO staff, senior leaders and managers.

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

BACKGROUND

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) consists of more than 1000 islands, and has a population of 57,738 concentrated primarily on the Marjuro and Kwajalein atolls. The main languages are Marshallese and English.

The United States and the Marshall Islands signed a Compact of Free Association in 1986, which meant the islands became self-governing after almost four decades of US rule. As part of this agreement RMI receives US military and economic aid of roughly US\$65m a year (approximately AU\$81.9m).¹ The Marshall Islands was admitted to the UN in 1991.

The government of the Marshall Islands operates under a mixed parliamentary–presidential system, which includes a head of state — the President, who is also the head of government — and a bicameral Parliament — the Council of Iroij (the upper house) and Nitijela (the elected lower house).

Executive power lies with the President, who is elected by the Nitijela, and the presidential Cabinet. The President appoints Cabinet ministers to leading positions in the government departments, with the approval of the Nitijela.

Legislative power resides in the Nitijela, which consists of 33 senators elected in 24 electoral districts by universal suffrage of all citizens above 18 years of age. The electoral districts correspond roughly to each atoll of the Marshall Islands. Four district centres — Majuro, Ebeye, Jaluit and Wotje — serve as local governments, with an elected council, a mayor, appointed local officials and a local police force. Funding for the district centres comes in the form of grants from the national government and revenues raised locally. Although no legal restrictions exist against the formation of political parties, no formal parties exist. Two ad hoc parties participated in the 1991 legislative elections, but dissolved soon afterward.

The Council of Iroij is comprised of 12 tribal chiefs who advise Cabinet and review legislation affecting customary law or any traditional practice, including land tenure.²

In 2000 Kessai Note became the first commoner to become president. His predecessors had been island chiefs. He ran on an anti-corruption ticket and is attempting to make his small nation more self-sufficient. In 2003 the US and the Marshall Islands agreed on a new Compact of Free Association, an extension of the lease to use the Kwajalein military base in exchange for economic aid. In January 2004 the Nitijela re-elected President Note.

For many years the Marshall Islands government has been concerned with the issue of global climate change. The Marshall Islands lie in open ocean and the islands are generally very close to sea level. Another major ongoing issue is the impact of US nuclear testing (1946–58) on the health of the islanders affected and on the environment, and compensation claims against the US for the damage to both.³

The RMI economy remains dependent on revenue from the US under the Compact, with over 80 per cent of government revenue being derived directly or indirectly from US grants. The government is the major employer, followed by the commercial and retail sectors.⁴

The survey was conducted in RMI during August and September 2004.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Communications section of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications registers radio and television stations and assigns broadcast frequencies. Apart from this, the Ministry does not regulate or oversee the media.

There is no legislation relating to the licensing of media in the Marshall Islands. The *Telecommunications Act PL1993-42* governs telecommunications, but the only reference to media is in Chapter 2, 'Political Broadcast Access', and Chapter 3, 'Radio Communications'. The two chapters address equal access of political candidates to broadcast time on radio stations; and radio communications generally. There is no legislation concerning newspapers, television or community media.

To begin broadcasting, a company needs to obtain a broadcast frequency from the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, and obtain a business licence from the Majuro Atoll local government. This is a standard business licence subject to the same requirements as an application for a retail store or bar. A business licence is the only requirement for newspaper publication.

Most licences for private radio stations are approved within a short time (a matter of weeks or months). The cost of licences, according to the Majuro Atoll local government tax office, are:

Radio licence	US\$150 per year
Television broadcasting	US\$300 per year
Newspaper publishing	US\$500 per year

The National Telecommunications Authority (NTA), a statutory body of the Marshall Islands government (the government is the largest shareholder), operates telephone and internet services, as well as high frequency (HF) radio communication with the remote outer islands.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands mirrors that of the US Constitution. It guarantees freedom of press, speech, religion and assembly. There is no separate freedom of information legislation.

1.3 Media regulation

There is no monitoring or regulation of broadcast content. There is one officer in the Ministry of Transportation and Communications who is responsible for issuing radio frequencies to companies that apply for licences, and the Majuro Atoll local government enforces tax compliance for all local businesses.

1.4 Defamation

Criminal libel is described in Chapter 1, Part XVII, section 143 of the *Marshall Islands Criminal Code* as:

Every person who shall unlawfully, wilfully and maliciously speak, write, print or in any other manner publish material which exposes another person to hatred, contempt or ridicule, shall be guilty of criminal libel, and shall upon conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding \$50 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both.

Civil libel is not spelled out in Marshall Islands law but, as the Marshall Islands court system generally follows the US legal system, the courts use the US definition of civil libel (AmJur 50 2nd), which states, in part:

The gravamen or gist of an action for defamation is damage to the plaintiff's reputation ... Defamation is an impairment of a relational interest; it denigrates the opinion which others in the community have of the plaintiff and invades the plaintiff's interest in his reputation and good name. A cause of action for defamation is based on the transmission of derogatory statements, not on any physical or emotional distress to plaintiff which may result.

There are no censorship laws.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are no local content requirements or legislation specifying community service requirements for radio and television. However, the Political Broadcast Access section of the *Communications Act* (Chapter 2) states that each candidate is to be given no less than 15 minutes of free airtime on any government-owned or -operated broadcasting facility, and that the statement may not be previewed or censored prior to being broadcast.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The government radio station, V7AB, does not operate separately from the government. It is a department within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. All V7AB staff are employees of the Marshall Islands government and, as such, are hired and fired by the government's Public Service Commission. The station has no authority for its own staff appointments. The government appoints the Manager and the Public Service Commission publicly advertises the positions (including qualifications needed), and then screens applicants and selects staff.

No legislation for V7AB could be located, nor was it possible to find a government officer who had information on its early history. According to the researcher, the most likely explanation for the lack of legislation or guidelines is that the station was established during the United States Trust Territory administration in the 1960s. When administration of the government was turned over to the Marshall Islands government in 1979, operation of the radio station simply continued as it had under the colonial administration. Although the legislation calls for the Secretary of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications to promulgate regulations regarding radio use, none was produced. This is apparently not unusual in the Marshall Islands, where regulations are often either not written or, in some cases, are developed many years after the passage of legislation.⁵

1.7 Government funding for media

V7AB received US\$260,000 in 2004; up from US\$196,000 the previous year. The main reason for this was an increase in salaries.

The station also generates an estimated US\$6000–\$10,000 a year from public announcements and advertising. This money goes into the government's General Fund, not to the radio station. The Manager said they could generate more but 'we do not promote it; we wait for people to come in with their ads'.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

The media outlets are:

Radio

- V7AB AM radio station in Majuro, owned and operated by the Marshall Islands government, with minimal advertising.
- V7DJ FM radio station in Majuro, privately owned by Ace Broadcast, owner Harry Doulatram, funded by advertising. Music station with no local news content.
- V7M1 FM radio station in Majuro, privately owned by Pacific Media Services, a consortium of five local businessmen, popularly known as V7-Emon radio (emon means 'good', so 'good radio'). It is funded by advertising and private investment, including financial support of individuals active in Aelon Kein Ad (Opposition political party).
- V7BNJ FM radio station in Majuro, owned and operated by the Bukot Nan Jesus (Looking for Jesus) Church. Privately funded by the church organisation. It has no local news content.
- V7AA FM radio station in Majuro, owned and operated by the Independent Baptist Church. Privately funded by the church organisation. It has no local news content.

Newspapers

- The *Marshall Islands Journal*, an independent weekly newspaper, in Majuro, privately owned by Joe Murphy.

Online news services

- There is one internet website (Yokwe Online, www.yokwe.net) established and run by a Marshall Islander living in California. It carries news content about the Marshall Islands from other internet websites and maintains various online forums. It is reportedly well used by Marshall Islanders who are able to access the internet. There are no in-country media organisations operating websites.

Television

- Marshalls Broadcasting Company (MBC), cable television, in Majuro, owned privately by Victor Milne of BilCo in partnership with the United Micronesia Development Association (UMDA), based in Saipan. It includes a local access channel that carries local advertising, announcements and occasional videos of local events, (such as church programs and dance performances. It does not broadcast local news. International content includes news from CNN, the BBC, American network channels (including Fox and US sports broadcaster ESPN), and various other international programs (Discovery, Nature Channel, and Taiwanese and Japanese network channels, and among others). The service is received by satellite transmission and broadcast locally by cable. Most of Majuro can receive MBC cable television but none of the other 22 inhabited outer islands receive television broadcasts, though outer islands with electric power or with private generators will have television sets and VCRs for watching videos.
- Armed Forces TV (AFRTS). The US Army at the Ronald Reagan Test Site at Kwajalein Atoll operates AFRTS, which is a worldwide US military-operated network. It does not qualify as a 'media organisation' in the country, but residents of Ebeye Island (the Marshalls' second major urban centre, estimated population 12,000) receive it. AFRTS TV at the Army base at Kwajalein provides no local news. It offers several channels of military programming, which includes major network shows and sports. It broadcasts 24 hours a day.

2.2

Radio and television program formats

V7AB radio broadcasts a combination of music, local news and international news from 6.30 am to 11.30 pm. Local regional and international news is broadcast at 12 noon, 6 pm and 10 pm in Marshallese and English. A combination of Marshall Islands, Pacific and Western music is played throughout the day. Periodically the station also provides live international news feeds from the BBC, Voice of America (VOA) and CNN, depending on transmission quality. Every weeknight from 6.30 to 8.30 pm and on Saturdays at midday, 30-minute to one-hour shows are produced by government departments or NGOs. On Sunday afternoon each church organisation in the Marshall Islands is allocated 15 minutes of free airtime to broadcast their sermons.

V7M1 radio combines Western and Marshall Islands music with talk shows on local, regional and international news items, listener call-in shows and international news broadcasts (BBC and others). The radio operates from approximately 9 am to approximately 11 pm daily.

V7AA radio is a religious station that plays a combination of religious and Western music, and airs religion-related programs. It occasionally broadcasts live international news feeds from Radio Australia and others.

2.3

Focus of newspapers

The *Marshall Islands Journal* contains local news covering all areas (politics, economic development, health, education, community activities and events, and sports) and some regional news, including regular stories from Kiribati by a Tarawa-based stringer. The editorial is published in English and Marshallese languages:

Readers particularly like to read about the details of political machinations and manoeuvring — the behind-the-scenes actions that lead to a final political result or decision. They like analysis: the 'why' of a particular development. This can often be difficult to provide because of our shortage of reporters on staff to pick up on these details and behind-the-scenes developments. Sports are very popular with younger readers. We've also found that our 'Are You Aware' column — a back column of one-sentence items that includes trivia, jokes and some hard, but very brief, news — and the 'Around Town' column — a chatty, gossip column of goings on around the country — are among the most-read sections of the paper. The letters to the editor is well read and well used by readers ... By virtue of being in Majuro, our news tends to be from Majuro-based sources. We are very aware of this limitation — for example, we do not have any stringers in outer islands — so the newspaper takes any opportunity presented to send staff to the outer islands to cover events and to get stories about the outer islands in

the paper. In particular, we try to regularly carry news about developments with copra, since this remains the basis for the outer islands economy. When statements are made in the Nitijela about problems on the outer islands, we attempt to both report these and develop stories around the statement. (Editor)

The *Journal* is primarily distributed in the two urban centres of Majuro and Ebeye (where an estimated two-thirds of the country's population lives) and at the army base at Kwajalein. There is limited distribution to a few outer islands. The *Journal* prints approximately 3300 copies each week. Readership is estimated at about eight people per copy.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

V7AB AM targets the general public, with evening shows geared for youth. Broadcasts reach the entire Marshall Islands, including all 22 inhabited atolls and single islands in the RMI. It is the only radio station that has the transmission capacity to reach all outer islands. It broadcasts in Marshallese and English.

V7M1 FM targets the adolescent to middle-age sectors. Talk shows on local political and social issues particularly target men and women in the 25-plus age group, in Marshallese and English. Broadcast power is limited to Majuro Atoll, the capital and portions of neighbouring Arno Atoll.

V7DJ, VBNJ and V7AA FM's broadcasts are limited to Majuro Atoll.

Of the two religious stations, V7BNJ appears to have the larger following because its format includes more Marshallese music.

The government station, V7AB AM, used to be the only radio station in the country. Its programming has not changed significantly in 15 years, despite the advent of competition, at least in the capital atoll of Majuro. V7AB is the only source of music, news and information on the remote outer islands (about one-third of the RMI's population of 55,000 live in the outer islands), where there is very heavy listenership. It appears that teenagers and young adults in Majuro are listening almost exclusively to V7DJ because of its all-music format for young people, with the exception of V7AB's 7–8 pm Teen Time Show, in which V7AB plays young people's music with dedications. V7M1's political talk and call-in shows, which started in early 2004, have quickly captured the afternoon and early evening radio audience of elected leaders, government officials and employees, businesspeople and other listeners in Majuro Atoll. Another reason that V7M1 is appealing to older Marshall Islanders, who may have marginal English skills, is that the station broadcasts international news in English, and then provides both a Marshallese translation and an explanatory commentary to give regional and international news context in the Marshall Islands.

The *Marshall Islands Journal* targets the high school to adult population, with publication in both languages (about two-thirds English to one-third Marshallese), which reaches a broad segment of the population who are literate in one of the two major languages. The *Journal* publishes advertisements in both languages, particularly those relating to legal matters and adoptions. According to the researcher, deficiencies in the public education system have led to a decline in the ability of younger people to read in either English or Marshallese, so the newspaper generally appeals to an audience 20 years and above. The largest readership, as noted, is in the two major centres, due to ease of distribution.

2.5 Audience research

V7AB did listener research 20 years ago. 'We need to take a look at it since we have competition now in Majuro. It wasn't an issue before.' (Manager)

V7M1 has not done a survey. They receive their feedback from telephone calls, people asking questions. 'We get lots of questions on the phone and also people give us information and tips. We can see [from this] that a segment of the population is interested in politics. In one two-day period, during 1 to 6 pm, we answered about 300 calls.' (Manager)

The *Marshall Islands Journal* does not conduct reader surveys, but it receives feedback through both phone calls and letters to the editor.

The main reasons given for not conducting audience research were lack of staff and resources.

2.6 NGO and government access

V7AB provides non-profit organisations and government departments with 30-minute to one-hour timeslots free of charge. They can also advertise (notices of meetings and events) free. The station

also provides free community announcements for schools. Government statutory agencies are charged US\$1.00 per airing for announcements.

V7M1 charges a US\$30–50 production fee, and it costs US\$30 to air a 15-minute program, which will be aired several times during the week (at no additional cost). The cost for NGOs is less. 'Government we charge the same as business because the government has a lot of federal funding for programs.' (Manager)

MBC does not charge for public access by NGOs and other agencies that provide videotapes of local activities (such as Christmas shows, dance programs, cultural activities or professionally produced films about the Marshall Islands). These videos are generally run repeatedly over a period of one or more weeks on the local access channel.

The *Marshall Islands Journal* gives NGOs, including private schools and community organisations, a significant discount on normal advertising rates. The paper also provides discounts to government agencies like Health and Education that engage in long-term advertising. The Editor commented that most of the government agencies promoting health and environmental awareness receive reasonable levels of funding from the US and other international donors to support publication of their materials. The *Journal* will also publish, at no cost, some articles from agencies that fit with editorial material (such as commentary on a health issue that is in the news). In addition, the paper will use material from press releases and statements for news stories.

2.7 Journalism resources

V7AB and V7M1 each have two journalists; and the *Journal* has four.

Average experience varies, with V7AB journalists having one and five years experience; V7M1 journalists having less than one year; and two journalists at the *Journal* with twenty-plus years experience and the other two with two years and one and a half years respectively. One journalist at the *Journal* is an investigative journalist.

V7AB and V7M1 require journalism recruits to have a high school diploma, and *Marshall Islands Journal* requires at least two years of college and/or substantial experience. The *Journal* said that completion of a high school diploma only is not adequate for working at the newspaper.

One of the two journalists at V7AB has received formal journalism training (certificate in journalism from USP); neither of the journalists at V7M1 has formal journalism training; and one of the four at the *Journal* has formal training (a business degree).

The pay scale for the journalists is:

V7AB: US\$7735–13,045 per year.

V7M1: Trainees receive US\$1.50 per hour. The Station Manager declined to provide salary levels for himself and the other main announcer, but indicated that part of their participation is on a volunteer basis.

The *Journal*: US\$7280–30,000.

Equipment resources

The media organisations all described their equipment as adequate. The main limitation is the lack of technical expertise on the islands for repair of computers, scanners and so on. When equipment breaks it must either be sent to Hawaii for service or get used to supply parts for other equipment.

Currently there is no telephone access to the outer islands. The only way to contact people on the remote islands is via HF radio, which is operated by the NTA, the Ministries of Health and Education, and private individuals. By the end of 2004 new cell-phone systems are expected to be installed in the outer islands of Kili, Jaluit and Wotje by the NTA, making phone contact possible for the first time.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

In terms of current affairs, only the privately run V7M1 is producing live interview programs on topical issues with listener talkback:

People are hungry for information. They do not know what's going on. We take things for granted that people understand, but they do not. We need to dissect issues, go into the small details. We get many calls expressing gratitude for airing news. People ask for follow up, but we do not have the staff to do it. A lot of callers ask us [about articles in the Journal and] what did the Journal mean ... ? Our audience is limited to Majuro. But we've learned that what we

say on the air is passed on to people in the outer islands through information network of radio operators. (Manager)

The government V7AB radio station broadcasts recorded interviews with government leaders on various current issues, but does not produce current affairs programs or talkback.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

V7AB produces 4 to 6 local stories a day, and V7M1 produces 2 to 3 stories each day.

The *Marshall Islands Journal* publishes 25 local news stories per week, 1 to 2 editorials, and about 10 items in its 'Around Town' column.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

V7AB said it airs interviews with government ministers about good governance, accountability and transparency. However the journalists wait for government agencies to give them press releases and their reports generally do not question government policy. V7AB hardly ever airs anything controversial or questioning of government policies — even to the point of ignoring significant news developments being reported in the *Journal* or on the private V7M1 radio station.

According to the Manager, V7M1 focuses on making the average person understand what the term 'governance' means. Good governance is about accountability, transparency, participation and predictability. 'Everyone associates accountability with money. We need to expand the definition of 'accountability.' V7M1's talk programs also tend to be geared toward Opposition party issues and use Opposition MPs as interview subjects.

The *Marshall Islands Journal* said it attempts to highlight issues and areas of governance that are being neglected or mismanaged. For example, according to the *Journal's* Editor, there does not appear to be general acceptance by government of the increasing level of poverty evident in the urban centres, and the need to address this relatively new development. The *Journal* has investigated violence and poverty, as well as publishing portions of studies conducted in the RMI about these issues:

We've seen serious problems in the Ministry of Justice/public safety, which we've focused on at length in an effort to generate discussion and change. Health concerns, such as the RMI's high rate of suicides, and the threat of HIV/AIDS, have also been addressed by the Journal. On a regular basis, the newspaper publishes reports from government audits about government spending and problems identified in the use of government money to ensure public awareness. (Editor)

The Editor said the *Journal* does not carry as much governance news analysis as it could. This reflects, in part, the limited number of staff involved in the editorial side of the paper.

While V7M1's two announcers talk about corruption issues on the air and as mentioned, there is one investigative journalist at the *Marshall Islands Journal*, there is no tradition of investigative reporting in the Marshall Islands. For many years the *Journal* was the only independent media in the country. With the establishment of V7M1 in 2003 there are now two independent media outlets engaged in local news reporting.

None of the media organisations reported receiving donor funding to produce media governance content.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

The main news-gathering techniques, in priority order, are telephone and personal interviews, internet searches and press releases. One media outlet cited reports and documents. V7MI also said it sourced news from the *Marshall Islands Journal*. Regional and overseas sources of news mentioned were Radio Australia, VOA, BBC, RNZI, PACNEWS, PINA Nius Online and the Pacific Islands Report online service.

None of these three media organisations has a website; however, the government radio station V7AB plans to launch V7AB online to include speeches and other news. The *Journal* has also considered establishing a website, but has no current plans for this.

2.12 Media access to government content

The government releases and speeches are available on a non-government web site, Yokwe.net. Since the hiring in April 2004 of a new Public Relations Officer (PRO) in the President's office, more speeches and press releases have been issued by the government. These are usually emailed to the

media as well as posted on Yokwe.net. Until recently, most government-issued releases were out-of-date and of little use other than as historical records.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

V7AB's Manager said the capacity of the journalists to go out and get stories was an issue:

Their interest in going out to get news [is a big factor]. Sometimes [our reporters] will get just two stories [in one day] and that's it. The staff is adequate. It is the willingness to go out and be aggressive. When they telephone around if the answer they receive is 'no news' they do not question further. There is more news available.

For V7M1, the number of trained journalists and available equipment are the two constraining factors.

The Editor of the *Marshall Islands Journal* commented:

If we had skilled and trained staff, the quality and quantity of our stories will certainly increase. But the number of stories that we can publish in any given week is almost always dictated by advertising. On occasion we will increase the number of pages by four if the significance of the news and/or features merits it, despite advertising limitations. But that is the exception rather than the rule. And on most weeks, we bump an average of five or more stories that are not time sensitive, and generally at least one letter to the editor, for lack of space. So there's no shortage of local news.

2.14 Threats to funding

Defamation and libel or censorship laws were not an issue for the three news media. According to the *Marshall Islands Journal* Editor, 'There are no censorship laws, and libel laws are much more liberal than in the South Pacific as they follow US laws. The main issue for the *Journal* is to maintain a high standard of accuracy, correct any mistakes quickly, and ensure that all sides have access to the newspaper.'

In the early 1990s, the Cabinet directed that all government ministries and agencies stop using the *Journal's* sister company, Micronitor News and Printing Company, for printing jobs, following the *Journal's* critical coverage of Nitijela's removal of a High Court judge who was handling a sensitive case. The cancellation of printing, however, was short-lived and returned to normal a short time later. The government has never stopped advertising in the newspaper due to editorial content.

2.15 Industry training

The media organisations provide ad hoc on-the-job training and some have had access to short training courses funded by donor agencies.

There are no journalism-specific courses at either the College of the Marshall Islands (CMI) or the USP's Extension Centre. Students attending USP in Majuro can transfer to the USP campus in Suva to undertake programs in journalism.

The Director of the USP Extension Centre, Majuro, said:

USP's goal is to get all certificate or diploma courses delivered through distance education by 2010, and by 2020 have all degree courses [provided this way]. So the Journalism Program [in Suva] has to start looking at ways to deliver its courses via distance learning. No one in Marshall Islands has shown an interest in journalism or to attend the USP Suva journalism program. The lack of student interest in English journalism is largely an issue of language proficiency problem — though teachers in USP Suva increasingly say that Marshall Islands students are talking and asking questions in classes.

V7MI Station Manager said he submitted a grant request for media training to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program (a locally based, US federally funded job-training program) but did not receive a response.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

There is no industry-developed code of ethics for journalists. V7AB follows an international code of ethics for journalists (not specified), and *Marshall Islands Journal* has developed its own guidelines.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

There is no media council or tribunal, and no national media association.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

- According to the researcher, with the exception of one or two people interviewed for this survey (across all three sectors), there appears to be little understanding of the term 'governance issues'. When asked about their priority 'governance issues', the response was usually a long pause. When prompted with the list of usually identified governance issues (women in development, health, education, poverty, financial management), it usually elicited a limited response, repeating a few of the mentioned items.
- There is a need to increase the standard and quality of journalism, through improved on-the-job training and encouraging journalists to gain formal qualifications.
- The status of journalism is a factor and journalism as a profession needs to be more attractive. The development of a national media association and code of ethics could assist this.
- There is no tradition of investigative journalism and, with a few exceptions, the news media are not proactive. Training could address this.
- The government radio station is limited to being a spokesperson for government, and legislation would need to be introduced to separate it from government.
- Media, government and NGO training workshops that improve interaction across the three sectors and the flow of information would be valuable.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR**3.1 Government sector media capacity**

There are nine ministries: Health, Education, Resources and Development, Justice, Public Works, Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs, Transportation and Communications and Finance. Of these, three ministries and one government agency produce media content on a reasonably regular basis: Health, Education, Resources and Development, and Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

There is no central government media unit. However, as noted, the President's office appointed a Public Relations Officer (PRO) in 2004 and he now regularly issues press statements and fields questions from the media related to the President's office and Cabinet Ministers. The PRO budget comes under the President's office. None of the senior Ministers has a PRO. Generally the radio stations and *Marshall Islands Journal* deal directly with the permanent secretaries, assistant secretaries and program managers to obtain news and information.

Human resources

The three ministries mentioned above and the EPA have the following staff who produce media content:

- Health: three full-time and one part-time officer.
- Education: a director, a video officer and a radio officer.
- EPA: three officers (two Marshall Islanders and one volunteer from Japan Overseas Cooperation).
- Resources and Development: three to four part-time officers.

None of the ministries or the EPA has a person regularly dealing with the media in terms of providing news and information for editorial purposes. The media staff are focused for the most part on producing prerecorded presentations. They rarely issue press releases. The Ministry of Health, with its full-page advertising campaign in the *Marshall Islands Journal* has been innovative to a certain extent by using, for example, a question and answer format on a particular topic and presenting the views of six-to-ten people together with their photographs. This certainly gives the presentation more readability and accessibility to the reader.

3.2 Government media processes

There is a briefing for V7AB with various ministers and/or department heads on average about once a month. This generally follows a question and answer format for 15 to 20 minutes. These radio programs are organised either following the attendance of a government minister or secretary at a conference or meeting of perceived importance, or in response to an issue that is generating local discussion (for example, a topic addressed in the Nitijela that the government wants to give more focus to). Historically the government has not been proactive in seeking media coverage, and there

are very few, if any, press conferences. Generally the PRO will issue a press release or a statement in response to questions from an individual media outlet.

Press releases are in English and they are sent to all media. The government does not monitor the effectiveness of its press releases and other government-produced media content. There is no government website but the President's office is considering this. The Marshall Islands Embassy in Washington, DC, maintains a website (www.rmiembassyus.org) but it is not regularly updated and not considered of value for news collection. When the President's office issues a release to the local media, it almost always provides it to Yokwe Online (www.yokwe.net), since this site is updated several times each week and is considered to be the primary source of news on the Marshall Islands on the internet.

The Nitijela sessions are broadcast live on V7AB. Nearly all public hearings on proposed legislation are also broadcast live. Nitijela sessions are not broadcast on television.

Hansard (Nitijela journal) is not immediately available to journalists or NGOs interested in parliamentary proceedings. The lack of timely reproduction of Hansard was noted in a 2002 UNDP-supported project that assessed the operations of the Nitijela as part of a Pacific-wide parliamentary good governance project. Virtually all of the work of the Nitijela is conducted in the Marshallese language, and the proceedings are transcribed in Marshallese. Historically it has been weeks and sometimes months before the verbatim journals of the session have been available. Because of the lack of timely reproduction, the *Marshall Islands Journal* has not requested a copy of the Nitijela journal in the last 20 years.

3.3 Government department media content

The Ministry of Health produces:

- Two radio shows each week on V7AB (health promotion, mental health);
- A quarterly newsletter;
- Newspaper advertisements once a week;
- Press releases on projects or programs, depending on activities;
- Occasional videotaped programs on MBC's public access channel focused on events (International AIDS Day, World Population Day, National Health Month, and others).

The Ministry of Education produces:

- A radio show weekly on V7AB;
- A weekly newspaper column in the *Marshall Islands Journal*;
- Videotapes of activities and events of the Ministry of Education, largely for archival purposes.

The EPA produces:

- A radio show weekly on V7AB;
- A monthly column in the *Marshall Islands Journal*;
- Videos of coral reef monitoring sites (underwater as well as above water), which are occasionally broadcast on MBC cable television;
- Press releases on project activities.

The EPA used to produce a quarterly newsletter but this has stopped as it needs to do a survey of reader interests; 'otherwise it is a waste of money to continue production'. (General Manager)

The Ministry of Resources and Development produces:

- A weekly radio program for V7AB that was recently discontinued, though it may be revived;
- Information on projects for regional newsletters;
- Press releases;
- An investment-related web presence through the Pacific Islands Forum.

The three ministries and the EPA produce information for the media mainly in Marshallese for radio programs and English for the newspaper.

The EPA reportedly provides the most useful press releases for print media, providing detail and substance. In addition, the EPA releases tend to be the most governance focused as they address

key public policy issues relating to pollution, marine conservation, and the community's role and responsibility in addressing these issues. The Ministry of Education's weekly column also has a strong governance focus, as it addresses many important student, parent and community issues related to problems and needs in public education. The Ministry of Health's advertisements in the newspaper generally focus on providing health information.

The researcher noted that radio programs produced by these departments tend, with a few exceptions, to rely heavily on one or two people talking at length throughout the program. There is little innovation in their production. This poses a problem, particularly in Majuro, where there are now four competing stations on the FM band. Twenty years ago there was no alternative station to the government radio station, V7AB, so people listened to government department programs each evening. Now people living in Majuro have other stations to turn to for music, news and entertainment. The government station V7AB has lost listeners to the other stations, which should be of concern to the government departments because fewer listeners, at least in Majuro, means fewer people being informed of their programs. Without innovation and creativity in producing these radio shows, it is very likely that listenership will further erode in the future.⁶

3.4 Media governance priorities

With the exception of several years in the early 1980s, when the government hired a professional television journalist from Hawaii as its press officer, the Marshall Islands government generally has not projected itself in the media in a focused manner. Although there are recurring themes to its press releases, government tends to not particularly 'champion' any governance issue or issues. In the last year, aside from the Compact of Free Association negotiations, the issues that have been highlighted the most by top levels of government include outstanding nuclear test-exposure health, land damage claims, climate change issues, education and health. By virtue of weekly advertising in the *Marshall Islands Journal*, both the ministries of Health and Education keep health and education governance topics in the public view.

However, news releases from the President's office tend to be event focused (related, for example, to the President attending an international meeting or presenting a speech at a graduation) and are not often issued on key governance issues.

3.5 Target audiences

Health targets youth for programs on drinking, smoking and sexually transmitted diseases, and targets older people for information on illnesses such as diabetes.

Education's radio program targets everyone, 'because everyone listens to V7AB, especially on the outer islands'. The show includes messages and announcements for teachers regarding developments at the Ministry of Education. The newspaper column is for the general public but, since it is mostly in English, it is targeting the English-speaking public.

The EPA's radio program targets young children with skits (such as marine characters talking about pollution and the environment). The newspaper column is aimed at people who can read English and have higher levels of education.

Resources and Development's radio program targeted people on the outer islands, and its other content targets the general public.

3.6 Qualifications and training

The current PRO in the President's office has a degree in communications and has studied public relations. The usual qualifications for media officers in other government departments (Health, Education, EPA, and Resources and Development) range from a high school diploma and good English speaking and writing skills to a two-year college degree. There has been very little training provided for media officers in government departments with the exception of a few short courses (Health, EPA, Resources and Development). Generally, most government officers working in media-related fields have learned on the job.

Additional media training priorities listed include:

Health: Developing public-speaking skills (for health promotion presentations), video filming techniques and editing, equipment repair, how to fully use new equipment and systems, and interview techniques.

Education: Radio production, video editing, radio show scriptwriting and organisation, interview techniques, and print design and production.

EPA: Journalism skills, writing to produce reports, and scriptwriting and narration for producing plays and skits on radio.

Resources and Development: Photography and the use of digital cameras, and how to integrate these into reports and websites, and newsletter production and editing.

Neither the President nor any senior ministers have undertaken media training to assist with their media work.

3.7 **Equipment**

The President's PRO has a digital camera and a laptop computer with internet access. The PRO described the equipment as adequate but said it would help to have one to two more staff in the office.

Health has a tape recorder, 16-channel mixer, microphones, a small hand-held Panasonic 700X camcorder, television/VCR, computer and printer. There is no internet access in the Health Promotion and Human Services office. The officers produce everything inside their 'studio', which is an office that is not soundproofed or outfitted as a recording studio. Health officers said the equipment is not adequate because they cannot produce certain video productions and they need video editing equipment. The video camera is small and the microphone is broken. They would like a large camcorder that produces better quality film and sound. It would also help to have a dedicated studio for recording programs.

Education has access to three cassette players, one computer and printer, a sound mixer, a video editing machine (the control is currently broken) and monitors, one working video camera and one that is broken, a combination DVD/television/VCR player, and two sound systems for outdoor programs. The media officers need a tape recorder, as the one they use is old and does not work well, and training in how to use the equipment.

The EPA has four digital cameras, one for each division. There is a computer (broken down at the time of the survey) with a printer, three tape decks, one microphone, a portable tape recorder, and one small mixer. The media officers use an office to record their programs and it is not soundproofed. The air-conditioner is loud so they have to turn it off to record, and the General Manager said the heat can be overwhelming. Officers waste time with equipment because it is broken. They would like to do video editing but they do not have video editing equipment.

Resources and Development has tape recorders, a laptop computer, projectors, computer with software and internet access. The Secretary said the officers have difficulty using V7AB's studio, so they produce their programs at the Ministry. He added that the equipment is sufficient but it could be better.

Although the quality of equipment in the government ministries and agencies varies, none used V7AB studios or equipment to record programs on a regular basis. Most indicated they preferred to use their own facilities, despite some technical challenges. The irregular use of V7AB's studios reflects both logistical difficulties of moving officers and equipment (such as musical instruments) to the radio station and the apparent difficulties in organising studio time with a technician present to assist. Most people felt it is easier to provide the station with a prerecorded cassette than to attempt to get its assistance to produce the tapes. There is also little media industry support for video production, as MBC cable television does not have studio equipment or technicians to support local production and editing of videos.

3.8 **Government-media relationships**

The President's PRO said that the office has a good working relationship with the media. Most of the releases he sends out are used. 'When it is a hot issue, they use our releases, but the releases tend not to be the focus of the story; they include parts of the release in the story that they publish.'

The PRO said that additional media staff in government and in the media are needed to improve government access to the media and the media's capacity to report on government.

3.9 **Observations on government media capacity**

- Focused training programs in the following areas will help the ministries and agencies, and the media as a whole. Such training could include: how to get your message out to the media and how to produce effective news releases and media interest; and how to effectively and creatively develop radio programs; and training in print media design and graphics.

- As noted in the media section, there is generally little understanding of the term governance. It would be helpful if training workshops could increase government ministry and agency knowledge and understanding of the term.
- While these agencies are producing prerecorded programs and some print media work, none have officers who regularly deal with the media from a news and governance perspective. It would be beneficial, therefore, to develop training opportunities that focused on topics such as why the media is an important tool in delivering governance messages and information.

In addition to this government–media relationships would be improved by:

- A better understanding of media deadlines;
- A better appreciation of the need to engage the media on issues of concern to the community (for example, senior officials making themselves available for comment in a timely manner);
- Greater awareness of the need to release government documents and information to the media in a timely manner.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

There are 34 registered NGOs in the Marshall Islands. The vast majority of NGOs are church-based or neighbourhood clubs that are loosely organised.⁷ A major development in the evolution of civil society in the Marshall Islands occurred in 2003 with the establishment of the Marshall Islands Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (MICNGO). This umbrella organisation was launched by five registered NGOs that are arguably the most active and organised NGOs in the country.⁸ It does not yet have any full-time staff, and was just preparing to launch its first donor-funded project (an Asian Development Bank supported survey on elementary school truancy in collaboration with the Ministry of Education) as this report was being prepared. The representative of Women United Together, Marshall Islands (WUTMI) interviewed for this survey is the President of the NGO Council.

There are five NGOs that produce media content on a regular basis:

- WUTMI
- Youth to Youth in Health
- Mission Pacific
- Adele Museum
- Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

WUTMI is the national women's organisation based in Majuro and with chapters in Ebeye Island (the other urban centre) and the 22 inhabited outer atolls and islands. WUTMI produces reports, brochures, a newsletter (two to three times a year), a weekly radio program on V7AB, and PowerPoint presentations. WUTMI videotapes meetings and conferences, but does not edit them. It has a grant request pending to produce a video on domestic violence. The focus of its media content is:

- The structure of the organisation and the responsibility and roles of the board and the outer island chapters so that they know what they are supposed to be doing and understand the mission of WUTMI;
- The topics of domestic violence, substance abuse, parenting skills and childcare, diabetes, sexually transmitted diseases and other health issues, and community development.

The Director of Administration said that getting broadcasting time on V7AB is still a problem. This is because WUTMI is viewed by some in government as a 'political' organisation; and it is said that the male-dominated hierarchy in the Marshall Islands is concerned about issues discussed in a radio program geared to empowering women to take action on their rights.

Youth to Youth in Health trains young people as peer educators, to be role models and health promoters in the community. It produces a 30-minute radio show on V7AB each week. It also videotapes events and does some basic editing, providing copies (at a small charge) to the

community. Its priority governance areas are youth problems, teenage pregnancy, alcohol abuse, HIV and sexually transmitted diseases, education and family planning.

Mission Pacific is a faith-based NGO that aims to empower the community in a variety of areas ranging from youth to health and culture through knowledge and access to information. Mission Pacific's Director says it has the capacity, experience, skills and technology necessary to produce captivating, informational literature and broadcast quality video and radio programs to meet international standards. It produces *Ajri in Majel* (Children of the Marshall Islands). This is a Marshallese Sesame Street that has been incorporated into the national curriculum (it was shown on the local access television channel and is used in individual classrooms on an ongoing basis). The video programs include themes such as sharing with others, understanding disabilities and instilling sensitivity for social concerns. The videos teach about nutrition, hygiene, study habits, and other necessary skills. With each video Mission Pacific includes teacher resources such as worksheets, study guides, pictures, colouring books, posters and pamphlets.

Other Mission Pacific projects include:

- A trash clean-up campaign, including television and radio public service announcements aimed at both adults and children, addressing pollution problems, how they affect the fragile environment and how to make a difference. The materials are produced in conjunction with the EPA and were broadcast on Majuro local access television and on V7AB AM radio.
- A public awareness campaign on reproductive health and population management in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
- A CARE (US-funded after-school program for elementary school children in Majuro's seven public schools) radio series that was aired once a week over three years.
- A video trip through the solar system, a program on Marshallese canoes, a Read Aloud series, HIV/AIDS awareness, and nationally historical events like the *laikwoj Eo An Jobro* canoe race.

Mission Pacific's Director said the government radio station V7AB is very open to airing any program it provides. He said this is also the case with the cable television station and four FM stations in Majuro.

Alele Museum is a quasi-government NGO that comes under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It promotes culture through video, radio, research and print activities, and produces a weekly 30-minute radio program for V7AB. This features stories, legends, chants and music, as well as traditional knowledge on such topics as local medicine, and focuses on cultural promotion and preservation. The museum also records cultural events. These used to be shown on Thursday nights on MBC but stopped when a staff member left. The museum plays the cultural videos on a television set outside its building, in an area that is frequented by many people in the community, and people buy copies of the edited tapes. The museum also used to produce a quarterly newsletter, but a shortage of staff prevented this from continuing. In June 2004 the museum launched its first website, <http://www.alele.org>.

Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area is an NGO based on an outer atoll. With the support of the Marshall Islands EPA, it raises public awareness about marine resources and involves the community in developing action plans to protect and conserve its resources. Unlike the other NGOs listed here, the Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area does not have any paid staff. It has received donor funding and is one of the few community efforts in marine environmental conservation in the Marshall Islands.

It issues press releases to the *Marshall Islands Journal* and V7AB, and news from the project is regularly incorporated into the EPA's weekly radio show on V7AB.

The radio and television programs produced by these NGOs are mostly in Marshallese with some English content for press releases and newspapers.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

For WUTMI, the target audiences are mothers, leaders in the community and men, especially for domestic violence, substance abuse and parenting.

Youth to Youth in Health targets teenagers and young adults, young mothers and fathers and the entire community for some messages.⁹

Mission Pacific targets all age groups and communities within the Marshall Islands. Locally produced media in the Marshallese language is so popular that adults will watch children's programming with the same interest as the children. There is very little locally produced and edited

video content available, and the Director said Mission Pacific-produced materials are in great demand by all sectors of the community. Locally produced videos also include local actors and actresses, and this is another reason that they are popular with all ages — because people want to see their relatives and/or friends on television.

Alele Museum targets the younger generation who do not know the customs and are not being told stories and legends in their homes.

Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area aims to inform the general public of what Jaluit is doing, as an example for other islands. Information presented on V7AB is also to increase the pride among people of Jaluit and so they know what is happening.

None of the NGOs has a formal mechanism for surveying target audiences. They get informal feedback through the telephone, conversations in shops, taxis and seminars, and through requests for information following broadcasts.

4.4 NGO media capacity

WUTMI has six staff involved part time in media production. On average 50 to 60 per cent of their time is spent developing and communicating materials and the rest of their time is spent on other duties.

Youth to Youth has five staff involved in radio production and two of the five produce video programs. None work full time on media production. Those working on the radio program spend two to three hours a week on this, and the two video officers spend three days a week on video production.

Mission Pacific has ten staff: six are full-time media staff and four are part-time media staff, both paid and volunteer. Mission Pacific is funded almost entirely through project grants, which pay the salary costs of employees. For this reason, if they are between projects or grants, staff may not be paid for short periods of time, thus the volunteer designation. Mission Pacific also has a small group of new media trainees, and has applied for funding from the WIA job-training funding agency to provide stipends while they train with the program. Meanwhile, the group of trainees has started working as part-time volunteers in anticipation that the project will be funded in the future.

Alele Museum has three staff: two are full-time officers and one is a part-time officer. They attend cultural events to video the activities and then edit the videos; they conduct interviews for the radio programs and they produce scripts for special projects, such as documentaries on medicine or other topics.

Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area has no full-time staff working on media, and one officer spends one to two hours a month on this.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

WUTMI requires media officers to have a high school diploma as they need people with a good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in Marshallese.

Youth to Youth cited knowledge of how to use equipment and ability to present programs.

Mission Pacific's Director said the core staff has extensive production and technical skills with over 60 years combined experience in theatre, film, music producing, directing, editing and marketing. Mission Pacific also has very well developed in-house training programs for new staff.

Alele Museum requires a high school diploma, but no formal education beyond that. The main requirement is the ability to work with the video editing and audio equipment.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

WUTMI, Alele Museum and Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area staff involved in media production have learned mainly on the job.

Two Adele Museum staff did participate in an SPC course connected to the Festival of Pacific Arts. Youth to Youth officers have participated in video training courses in the early and mid-1990s that also included training on the use of computer graphics, Photoshop for poster design and leaflets (through SPC-supported training), and training to develop information, education and communication (IEC) materials in 2000.

Mission Pacific has developed a customised curriculum to offer training in all areas of video and audio production and computer skills for its recruits. Although the curriculum that it uses for training is based on college textbooks and models, it is not accredited by any institution. When all of these skills are mastered in a studio setting, they plan to train a small, dedicated crew as a news team to report on local, national and international events.

The NGOs listed the following additional media training priorities:

WUTMI cited training in radio formats to make the programs more appealing or entertaining to increase listenership, and training to develop writing skills.

Youth to Youth in Health listed training in video editing and filming; scriptwriting and storyboard development; video graphics and captions; how to use the mixer to improve audio recording; interview techniques; and training to understand the importance of a radio show.

Mission Pacific has initially provided training programs to improve and develop the skills of its own staff. However, more recently it has been discussing with some local government-funded agencies, such as CMI and the WIA, the possibility of doing media training for other people and agencies. There is no on-island media training program available for film, radio or print, so Mission Pacific has invested in training its own staff in order to produce high-quality material. But the number of people that it has trained to date is relatively small. It said it is at least five years away from outputting professionals with the capacity to develop their own quality media programs. According to Mission Pacific's Director, the areas of greatest weakness in the media sector are administration, management and maintenance skills.

Alele Museum Executive Director said video and radio production training is needed to improve the quality of the programs, along with training in scriptwriting.

Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area Project Manager said training is needed for people to learn to develop media that communicates appropriately to different audiences (such as people living on the outer islands).

4.7 NGO media production equipment

WUTMI has a tape recorder, computers with internet access, DVD/television/VCR, laptop and PowerPoint projector. It is purchasing a HF radio to improve communications with its 22 outer island chapters. WUTMI produces its program at V7AB and sometimes at Youth to Youth in Health.

Youth to Youth in Health has one tape player (that is broken now), one microphone, one mixer, two portable tape recorders for interviewing, one S-VHS video camera, editing equipment (that dates back to the early 1990s), computers and printer. No internet access.

Mission Pacific has a very extensive equipment list for video, audio and print media and has invested heavily in this area. Mission Pacific has arguably the best video and audio editing studio, and the best range of audiovisual equipment and computer software programs on Majuro, as well as the best trained operators and technicians.

Alele Museum has VHS editing equipment, a title maker, television monitors, two audio cassette decks, two microphones, three VCRs for producing multiple copies of videos, computers and internet access. It describes the equipment as incomplete and out of date.

Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area has no equipment and relies on EPA resources.

4.8 NGO media processes

The WUTMI radio show is aired free on V7AB. WUTMI only pays for announcements (US\$1.00 each time one is aired). It rarely uses MBC cable television. V7M1, the private FM station, also airs programs for free. Internet access costs US\$3.60 per hour.

The *Marshall Islands Journal* provides significant discounts to NGOs, particularly if they use space on a continuous, long-term basis. Generally established NGOs receive a 50 per cent discount on advertising.

Youth to Youth in Health accesses V7AB and MBC cable television at no cost and the newspaper provides discounts.

Mission Pacific pays US\$1.00–3.00 per minute for radio advertising. Culturally sensitive, non-political radio and television programming is usually aired free of charge due to the great demand for this type of programming. Mission Pacific describes the *Journal* as very affordable for

advertisements and as the most accessible form of media, saying the paper is open to receiving outside journalistic resources at no cost.

Alele Museum does not pay for radio or television access and Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area provides information for news to the Journal and V7AB at no cost.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

As noted earlier, WUTMI is establishing an HF radio network with the outer islands and Youth to Youth has discussed the idea, but money is an issue.

Mission Pacific was approached by community churches to assist in the development of a community radio station to give a voice to the local churches in RMI. Mission Pacific brokered the donation of equipment and helped organise fundraising events to offset other costs. It provided training on all aspects from administration to financial management and bookkeeping to technical support and performance. The result was V7BNJ FM, run by the Bukot Nan Jesus Church. It is funded through the purchase of airtime and donations from community-wide churches.

Alele Museum operated its own television broadcasting station in the late 1980s and early 1990s. It featured a large number of videos of cultural events that were locally produced, and also provided straight commercial programming (such as daily soap operas). There are two reasons that it closed: it was competing with MBC's cable television operation, and MBC complained about the station's commercial programming; and the equipment was not maintained and repaired, resulting in an inability to broadcast even if it could have resolved the conflict with MBC.

4.10 Funding for media content

WUTMI has received a small grant from the New Zealand government to purchase a multi-system television (for outreach activities and education) and they have a grant request with the Pacific Islands Fund (US) for funding to develop a video on domestic violence in the Marshall Islands. Virtually all equipment was purchased through donor grants. Staff are funded through a combination of grants, including the Parents as Teachers project that is supported by the Hawaii-based Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL), a major educational institution for the US-affiliated Pacific islands; US federally funded WIA; and the Substance Abuse, Prevention and Treatment Program of the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Youth to Youth in Health has funding from the SPC and UNFPA for health promotion and development of IEC materials; and the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei provided a small grant for promotions in the newspaper and publication of other materials. All equipment is purchased with donor funding. Program staff are supported by the UNFPA; the Substance Abuse, Prevention and Treatment Program; and WIA.

The following organisations have participated in funding Mission Pacific's training, equipment purchases and project funding: UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, the British High Commission, the Government of Japan, the US Federal Government's Department of Education, US Embassy (RMI), SPC, PREL, WIA, and CARE (US); as well as the RMI Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EPA.

The US National Parks Service (as part of its Historic Preservation Program) supports the radio and video programs of the Adele Museum.

Several donors have supported the Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area project for public awareness activities. These include Wetlands International (Netherlands), International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN), SPREP, National Marine Fisheries (US), and the Palau International Coral Reef Centre.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

Some general observations about the NGO community in the Marshall Islands follow.

Despite significant advancement in the past two or three years, the development of NGOs in the Marshall Islands remains in its infancy. There are only a handful of NGOs that are registered, have paid staff, have capacity to manage projects and donor funding, and have an established record of accomplishment.

Few NGOs have the capacity to engage with the media beyond producing prerecorded programs for radio or television, and even then the creativity and innovation of these is limited. In terms of generating news (whether in the form of press statements, interviews or other activities), most NGOs generally lack capacity or rely on one already over-burdened staff member to handle this.

Most NGOs, like government departments, do not have a media person dedicated to interacting with the news media on a regular basis. Generation of news from NGOs usually depends on the news media soliciting information.

NGOs, like the government departments mentioned earlier, have generally not yet adjusted to the changed media environment in Majuro. They are still focused on producing material for the government radio station, V7AB, even though the FM stations have captured a significant (but undetermined) portion of the listener market in the capital. For communicating with people on the outer islands, V7AB remains the only station that effectively reaches all islands.

Suggested strategies include:

- Like government departments, NGO staff engaged in media production would benefit from focused workshop training programs that address ways to improve the quality of radio programs and print presentations to get their message out through the media; and the development of better organisation and management of media production.
- In view of the skill and ability of Mission Pacific's media program, this organisation is well positioned to assist the training of local NGOs in specific areas of media production.
- Hands-on workshops (which involve output-oriented working sessions) to improve scriptwriting, storyboarding and program organisation for both radio and video are needed.
- Technical training in equipment maintenance and repair would be valuable, as there are few people skilled in this area in local NGOs.

¹ All currency referred to in this chapter is in US dollars. US\$1.00 equals approximately AU\$1.25.

² Source: <http://www.rmiembassyus.org/government/overview.html>.

³ See <http://www.rmiembassyus.org/nuclear/chronology.html> for details.

⁴ Source: <http://www.dfat.gov.au> Republic of the Marshall Islands Country Brief.

⁵ In February 2005, as part of a UNESCO-funded workshop with the government radio station, V7AB, 'Getting the Message Across: Transparency and Governance in the Marshall Islands', a draft policy for the national broadcaster was discussed, with the hope that this could be finalised and submitted to Cabinet. See http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=18261&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

⁶ The lack of creative, innovative government and/or NGO-produced talk programs is an issue in a number of the countries surveyed.

⁷ A 1998 study for the Canada Fund identified 553 community-based organisations, the majority of which were not registered or incorporated.

⁸ Three of these NGOs, Women United Together, Marshall Islands, Youth to Youth and Mission Pacific, are included in the survey.

⁹ Note: There is a very liberal definition of 'youth' in the Marshall Islands. 'Youth groups' often involve people who are in their 40s. But generally, the term 'youth' includes people in their mid-to-late 20s.

SAMOA

BACKGROUND

Polynesians settled in the Samoan group of islands from about 1000 BC. Shortly before the European arrival settlements had developed, along with a stratified society with chiefs called *matai*. The first European visitor to Samoa, in 1768, was French. Treaties were signed between the chiefs and European nations in 1838–39. The British, German and US rivalry for influence compounded continuing dissonance among the chiefs. The Treaty of Berlin in 1889 gave Western Samoa the possibility of becoming independent; however, continued strife led to the Treaty being annulled and Western Samoa being annexed to become a German Territory until 1914, when it became occupied by a New Zealand expeditionary force.

After World War II, Western Samoa became a United Nations Trust Territory under the administration of New Zealand. In May 1961 a plebiscite held under the supervision of the United Nations on the basis of universal adult suffrage voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence. In October of that same year the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution to terminate the trusteeship agreement as from 1 January 1962, on which date Western Samoa became an independent sovereign state. When it gained independence, Western Samoa earned the distinction of being the first independent sovereign state in the South Pacific. The prefix 'Western' was dropped in July 1997 and the country renamed itself the Independent State of Samoa.

Samoa consists of the two large islands of Savai'i and Upolu, the small islands of Manono and Apolima, and several uninhabited islets lying off the coast. The capital and chief port is Apia, on Upolu. The population is 176,848 (2001 Census).

Samoa has a stable parliamentary democracy and the Constitution provides for a Samoan Head of State and a unicameral legislature elected by universal suffrage. However, access to Parliament is limited. Of the 49-member Parliament, 47 seats are reserved for the *matai*, the other two for Samoans of mixed blood, and there have been debates on phasing out these two seats. Executive authority is vested in the Head of State. The Samoan government is administered by the Cabinet, which consists of the Prime Minister and 12 ministers selected by the Prime Minister. There are two major political parties. All laws passed by the Legislative Assembly require approval of the Head of State.

The current Head of State, Malietoa Tanumafili II, holds the position for life; upon his death his successors will be elected by the Legislative Assembly for five-year terms. The Constitution provides for a Council of Deputies consisting of not more than three very senior traditional title holders. The function of the Council is to act in place of the Head of State if that office is vacant or if the holder of the office is absent or incapacitated. A Council member is not eligible for election to the Legislative Assembly.

Samoa has an independent judiciary, including a specific Lands and Titles Court to resolve disputes over land and traditional titles. Samoa's political stability has been promoted by the effectiveness of this court, which has operated for a century.

Samoa's developing economy is small and agriculturally based. Economic growth since the mid-1990s has been driven by fisheries, agriculture, tourism and the government's efforts to promote economic stability. Subsistence agriculture remains the primary economic activity, although its share in GDP is gradually declining. Remittances from Samoans living in New Zealand, Australia and the US are also a significant source of income. Approximately 20 per cent of households have incomes below the basic needs poverty line and are experiencing some degree of financial hardship on a

daily or weekly basis. The Samoan government remains committed to macroeconomic stability, implementing measures to contain government expenditure. Samoa has built a reputation as the best model within the Pacific of effective economic and administrative reform, and is widely described as such by international institutions. It is possible Samoa will be eligible to graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status in 2006, and this may give an impetus to foreign investment by lowering the financial risk factors associated with LDC status.¹

The survey period in Samoa was September 2004 to January 2005.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT) is responsible for broadcasting and telecommunications.

The MCIT issues licences for radio and television and oversees and regulates the operation and use of radio and television licences. It also formulates policies regarding information technology and the internet. In addition to this, MCIT is in charge of the government newspaper *Savali*. This newspaper used to be produced by the office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet but was relocated to MCIT in 2003 as a result of public sector reforms.

All broadcasting licences are issued under the *Broadcasting Ordinance 1959* and *Broadcasting Amendment Act 1988*. Frequencies are issued by the MCIT under the *Post Office Act 1972*. Licences for commercial radio and television stations can be obtained in reasonable time if all requirements are met and the necessary information on location, owners, transmission power, frequencies, broadcast hours and ability of the applicant to operate satisfactorily is provided.

In considering applications the Minister gives regard to 'the general policy of government in relation to broadcasting and the required standards of broadcasting ... and the extent to which the proposed service is necessary or desirable in the public interest and the economic effect on existing operations', as outlined in section 11c (2) of the *Broadcasting Ordinance 1959*. No licence application has been refused. Two television licences were granted in 2004 and the operators have been given a year to have their stations running, or face possible withdrawal of the licence.

The MCIT is currently developing a draft broadcasting policy that takes into account the size of the country, population and market in relation to the number of licences issued each year. The draft will include the withdrawal of licences if the licensee has not established an operational station within a certain time frame.

There is no legislation for newspaper licensing. Only a business licence is required and this can take a few days to obtain. The annual business licence fee of ST\$400 (AU\$196)² a year is paid to the Ministry of Inland Revenue. The annual licence fee for television is ST\$3000 and for radio ST\$1000. At the time of reporting these fees did not apply to the national public service broadcaster.

The MCIT has just completed public consultations on a draft *Telecommunications Act 2004*. Other than bringing the law up to date to address current telecommunications and technological developments, the legislation will establish a regulatory body that will operate independently of government and the MCIT. The aim is to encourage a level playing field for all the players, including government corporations such as SamoaTel and the private sector, competing in the telecommunications and information technology businesses.

SamoaTel is a state-owned enterprise, licensed by the Government of Samoa to provide local, national and international telecommunications, and all postal services. SamoaTel was corporatised in July 1999 and is 100 per cent owned by the government.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

Section 13 of the Constitution states that all citizens have the right to freedom of speech and expression. There is no specific guarantee for freedom of the press or the right to information in the Constitution, and no freedom of information legislation.

1.3 Media regulation

The *Broadcasting Amendment Act 1988* gives the Minister the power to issue licences for privately owned and operated radio stations. Although not specified by law, the operation of private

stations, content and staffing is solely up to the owner of the station, as long as they satisfy the 'required standards of broadcasting' under the Act.

As a result of the growth of the media industry, government is considering establishing a regulatory body to look at local content, especially more local content on television.³

1.4 Defamation

The *Defamation Act 1992/1993*, No. 33 is a concern to the media as the legislation includes civil and criminal libel. Of equal concern is the *Newspapers and Printers Act 1992/1993*, No. 25. Section 10 requires journalists to make available materials (such as correspondence, photos and sources) to someone suing a media organisation for defamation before the case goes to court. According to the President of PINA:

*We in the media see this as mainly a ploy by the government at the time to discourage members of the public from writing revealing letters to the Editor under non-de-plumes, often about mismanagement and corruption in high places.*⁴

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

Content quotas are not specified under the law. The amount of local content is determined by the operator depending on what they see as the needs of the audience they serve or target. The *Broadcasting Act 1959* section 4.2 refers generally to content as:

- (a) ... promoting and assisting in the development and carrying on those artistic, cultural, educational and informational pursuits which are usually included in the purpose of broadcasting.
- (b) To organise and present concerts and entertainments for the general public, notwithstanding that the concerts or entertainment may not be broadcast.
- (c) To organise and present concerts and entertainments for persons in hospitals and other similar institutions.
- (d) To do all such things as appear necessary or expedient in the interest of the community for the purpose of developing and improving broadcast talent.

Community service requirements are also not specified under the Act. This means the television and radio stations have no obligation to include this content. Campaign messages from candidates for political offices are treated as commercial broadcasts and have to be paid for.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

Radio was first established by the New Zealand colonial administration in 1948 to broadcast messages from the administration to the public and later established as a separate entity under the *Broadcasting Ordinance 1959*. Television was only introduced in 1993. Broadcasting was a separate government department under the control of the Public Service Commission until a realignment of government departments in 2003 as part of the Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP).

The Samoa Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) was established in 2003 with the *SBC Act* that merged radio and television. There is no public broadcasting charter as such for the SBC but it is guided by the general terms of the *Broadcasting Ordinance 1959* and *Broadcasting Amendment Act 1988* in the delivery of its services. The *SBC Act* only covers administrative and technical requirements, not program services.

The SBC has a Board. The Chairman is the Minister of Communication and Information Technology. Members are mainly from the private sector and representatives of the public appointed by Cabinet in line with the *SBC Act*.

The CEO of the SBC is chosen by an interview panel appointed by the SBC Board or Cabinet and the decision is approved by Cabinet. The reason(s) for the recommendation is not made known to the public although the job description and qualifications required are widely advertised. The appointee is announced through a Cabinet paper, and the position has long been regarded as a political appointment.

Government has indicated that the SBC is to be privatised and operated commercially. The absence of clear-cut definitions and obligations under law for the provision of public service broadcasting (PSB) raise questions about the future of PSB in Samoa once the SBC has been privatised.

1.7

Government funding for media

In 2004, the Government provided ST\$600,000 for SBC radio and television for community service content such as religious services, Independence Celebrations, the Teuila Tourism Festival and Parliamentary broadcasts.

Under the current system individual government departments and agencies, such as Health, Education and Agriculture, pay for airtime for information programs from their annual budgets.

The SBC raises more than 70 per cent of its total budget. Its radio budget for 2004 came to about ST\$1.4m and television ST\$2.8m.

The *Savali* newspaper receives ST\$150,000 from government to cover all its operational costs. It does raise some additional funding from government advertising and some private sector advertising.

2.

MEDIA SECTOR

2.1

Media outlets

In the last 10 years, the Samoan media industry has grown considerably. There are currently 14 media outlets.

Radio

- SBC, the national public service broadcaster, operates SBC Radio 1, as well as SBC TV. The SBC is a government-owned corporation. The corporation started a commercial FM channel in February 2005 and currently has no website. As noted, the SBC is listed by government as one of the state-owned corporations to be privatised within the next two years.
- Radio Polynesia is privately owned and is fully commercial with four FM stations, Magik 98.1, K-Lite FM, K-Roq 96 and Talofa FM. Radio Polynesia Limited is owned by businessman Maposua Rudolf Keil. Its website is at <http://www.fmradio.ws/>
- Lafou Christian is a Samoan Christian radio station owned by the Youth for Christ Ministry. It is funded by advertising revenue, sponsorship and supporter contributions.
- Graceland Broadcasting Network (GBN) operates Graceland Radio and GBN television. It has some local programming but mainly broadcasts American Pentecostal prerecorded programs. It is owned by a ministry operated by Ricky Meredith and his wife. It is funded by advertising revenue, sponsorship and supporter contributions.
- Catholic radio Aiga Fesilafa'i is operated by the Catholic Church and funded by sponsorship and contributions. This is discussed in more detail in Section 4, Civil Society, along with other Catholic media content.
- The largest religious denomination, the Congregational Christian Church (34.7 per cent) is planning to have its own FM radio station soon.

Newspapers

The *Samoa Observer* is the biggest newspaper in the country and the only one published seven days a week. It is published in English and Samoan and prints around 5000 copies daily. It is estimated that every one copy is read by up to nine people. The *Samoa Observer* has its own press at its headquarters in Vaitele in suburban Apia, Samoa's capital. At the time of the survey it was setting up additional presses and newsrooms at its offices in Auckland, New Zealand, and Tafuna, American Samoa, to publish editions from there. The *Samoa Observer* is privately owned by Editor-in-Chief Savea Sano Malifa and publisher Muliagatele Jean Malifa. The *Samoa Observer* also has an online news service at <http://www.samoaoobserver.ws/>. It was unable to fully participate in the survey.

Newsline is published Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays in English only. It is privately owned by Pio Sioa. *Newsline* was unable to participate in the survey.

Le Samoa is published weekly in English and Samoan by Talamua Publications Limited, a local company owned by Lance Polu. It publishes 6500 copies each week and is printed in and distributed from Auckland, New Zealand.

Savali Weekly and *Savali Samoa* (monthly) are government-owned newspapers. The *Weekly* publishes in English and Samoan and the *Savali Samoa* in Samoan. The papers are funded by

government and are distributed free, but compete in the market for advertising revenue. The print run is 500 copies for the *Savali Weekly* and 3000 copies for the *Savali Samoa*.

Lali is the newest publication, first published in December 2004 as a television guide. It is published fortnightly by the SBC. It is being developed as an entertainment magazine with coverage of current news and entertainment stories, and competes for advertising revenue.

Apart from the papers mentioned above, there are also three newspapers that are foreign owned and based in Auckland, New Zealand, which compete for the advertising revenue in the same market as the four local papers. Each of the papers is also distributed in Samoa and New Zealand and has an office and staff in Apia. The newspapers are: the *Samoa Post* (Samoan language weekly), *Samoaana* (Samoan language weekly) and *Samoa International* (Samoan and English weekly).

Online news services

Samoalive (<http://www.samoalive.com/>) provides a range of online information and services and posts news from local and overseas news sources it has alliances with. It does not employ journalists. Samoalive is owned by KVAConsult, a consulting group based in Apia.

Television

- SBC TV is the national free-to-air broadcaster. It has also begun a second channel carrying China's CCTV 9 service.
- There are two pay television operators, ProCom Sky TV, owned by Tapasu Leung Wai, and Star Television, owned by Feo Nemaia Esau, which provide four and five channels respectively, with the former planning a total of eight channels soon.
- GBN Television, Christian television, listed earlier.
- Two more television licences have been granted to private operators for free-to-air channels and user-pay channels, which have not yet commenced operations. These have been awarded to Radio Polynesia Limited (see radio section) and LauTV, a company operated by former Televisie Samoa (now SBC TV) Chief Executive Leota Uelese Petaia.

2.2 Radio and television program formats

SBC Radio 1 broadcasts a mix of commercial and local community programs including talkback, 'with a balanced mix of music and talk as against a purely commercial or music station'. SBC Radio 1 has national coverage and aims to introduce more Samoan language programming.

SBC TV is predominantly foreign programming during the day and some local entertainment filmed during national days. Local programming in the evening includes *Lali*, which is a TV adaptation of notices, birthdays and funeral notices from radio interspersed with presenters' commentary. There is daily local news and a documentary program, *Ete Silafia* (Do You Know?), covering art to education to police work. A series on legends and oral traditions focuses on language and culture.

The SBC CEO said news teams for both television and radio attempt to include news from rural people and communities:

A lot of these types of stories are covered regularly such as women's development projects such as handicrafts, village health projects, agriculture, educational centres, roads and water supplies. It must be noted as well that quite a lot of these news stories tie up to the government's development agenda and may have a political edge to it to have wide media coverage, especially on national radio and TV. Opening of roads, water supplies and health centres usually provides transportation for the media to ensure coverage of such projects.

Radio Polynesia has four stations catering for various audiences. Magik 98.1 FM is described as 'Samoa's No. 1 hits music station for the latest hits from around the world', with latest news and sports. K-Lite is an easy-listening music station playing songs and music from the 1950s, '60s and '70s, plus news and information. K-Roq 96 plays classic and modern rock plus songs of the 1970s and '80s. Talofa (88.5 FM and 99.9 FM) plays Samoan and island music, and includes news, sports and talks programs.

Catholic radio Aiga Fesilafa'i was launched in December 2003, realising a long-held vision of the Catholic Church, which goes back to the 1960s, to have its own radio station. Aiga Fesilafa'i means 'a family that consults'. The station focuses on the core values in Samoan society of communication, consultation and transparency to enhance good governance and accountability for the welfare of the overall society.

Other than core material on the faith and teaching of the Catholic Church, Aiga Fesilafa'i radio produces content on social issues, justice and peace. These programs reflect on good governance from the grassroots to the highest levels in society. They consist mainly of talkback programs on issues such as media freedom and good governance; suicide; condemned babies; rights of children and women; unemployment and child labour; and commercialisation of church festivals and their social impact. Good governance in the Church is also covered, such as radio discussions on donations to priests and the church at large, when families of those donating have little food to go around and their children skip school because their parents cannot pay their school fees. The radio broadcasts mainly in Samoan but it also airs material in English.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The *Samoa Observer* has a strong focus on local news and views. It prides itself on being the main source of independent news and views for Samoa's people, and providing a voice for the voiceless. Its emphasis on promoting and defending freedom of expression and information is reflected in a series of international and regional awards it has won. Its local news coverage has a strong focus on investigative journalism. Around the time of this survey it published reports on alleged mismanagement in Samoa's Health and Customs ministries.

Le Samoa focuses on general news and local stories for a Samoan readership in various countries. It allocates very little space (only five per cent) to regional news. News about rural areas is given prominence in the paper's coverage from time to time, especially news that has a major impact on a national level, such as the environment, education, health and politics. *Le Samoa* also carries the week's issue online but has not been updating this due to time constraints. It is developing an online news service that can be updated on a daily basis and this will be different from the paper's news content.

The focus of the *Savali* newspapers is presenting government policies, activities and priorities 'in as clear and effective way as possible and to promote the government policies and programs':

We try to show government's angle in issues that are covered by other media. We find that, when covering the same issues, we tend to have very different angles from that of the private media. However, government stories and issues aren't the only things covered by our team in the newspaper. We don't want to be seen as just providing news on government ... our newspaper last week featured the Opposition Party Leader on the front page at the opening of a new school building in one of his districts. We try to ensure there is a balance in the news coverage. We have a lot of stories in the papers [both Savali Samoa and Savali Weekly], which are not on government related issues ... stories of human interest that people of the Samoan community can relate to. (Editor)

The *Savali Samoa* also provides news to Samoans in Samoa and overseas on lands and titles cases and related matters. The Editor said that in the early 1900s this was the sole purpose of the original newspaper.⁵

According to the Editor, the government is encouraging more development and emphasis on the needs of the rural communities. *Savali* journalists cover activities happening in the villages:

For instance in the rural villages recently, there have been community based women's workshops teaching sewing, mat weaving, flower arrangements and these sort of skills that would lead to self employment for those in the villages ... Savali went out to the villages and covered these workshops and reported on the progress of the women and their newly acquired skills and how they would use these skills to earn a living for their families. Savali reporters also travel to Savali when necessary to cover the opening of new district schools or public roads and that sort of thing. (Editor)

The MCIT website was set up in 2004 and *Savali* provides the news for this website as well as its own allocated page. *Savali* also provides the news every now and then for the Government Press Secretariat (GPS) website (<http://www.govt.ws/>).

We insert the top stories both in English and Samoan online word for word ... we don't have an edited version for the website. Almost the entire Savali Samoa is on the website, especially the lands and titles cases and related matters. This is for the benefit of Samoans living abroad who want to keep up to date with the recent land and titles issues. (Editor)

2.4 Target audience and distribution

The SBC radio and television aims for a general audience covering all age groups although there are designated timeslots for specific audience groups, such as children, youth, women and sports. As noted, SBC Radio 1's AM service reaches all the country. It also reaches a wide audience in American Samoa and has served as the information source during cyclones.

SBC television has 80 per cent coverage. The remaining 20 per cent of the country has marginal or no coverage due to very difficult terrain, but there are efforts to have 100 per cent coverage by 2006.

The SBC said it is developing a website to inform Samoans overseas and other interested parties on what is happening in Samoa.

Radio Polynesia's Talofa FM caters for a general Samoan language audience with news in English and Samoan. K-Lite targets older audiences, 30-plus. K-Roq targets the 12–22 age group, and Magik 98.1 targets the 25–39 age group. These three stations broadcast in English. Magik 98.1 covers about 80 per cent of the country, including the outlying islands, and is now venturing into neighbouring American Samoa. K-Roq and K-Lite have about 60 per cent coverage of the Samoan islands.

In February 2005, Radio Polynesia wrote to the MCIT to complain that state owned SBC's new FM station was providing unfair competition, having been approved to run at 1,000 watts compared with Radio Polynesia's 300 watts. The SBC's FM frequency is also too close to Talofa FM, and is causing interference.

Aiga Fesilafa'i radio aims for a broad audience, including children and students.

The *Samoa Observer* targets a broad range of audiences and is distributed in the main town area and business centres on the main two islands, Savai'i and Upolu. Copies are also distributed outside the main business centres but on limited scale. However, many copies are carried back to rural villages on Upolu each day by people who travel to work in Apia. This and a relatively high cover price of ST\$2 (ST\$2.50 on Sundays) leads to a high pass on rate per copy. The high cover price for newspapers published in Samoa is a result of the high landed costs of materials such as newsprint, including duties, and local utility costs. The *Samoa Observer's* target is to have nationwide distribution. Several hundred copies are also flown for distribution in American Samoa daily. The *Samoa Observer* plans to overcome problems flying papers to American Samoa on time for distribution first thing each morning by setting up its own press there. This is scheduled to be operating by late July 2005. Thousands of citizens from independent Samoa live and work in American Samoa, including providing most of the work-force for the two large fish canneries on Pago Pago Harbour.

Le Samoa focuses on news of interest to Samoans in various countries. The newspaper is distributed in Samoa, American Samoa and to Samoan communities in New Zealand, Sydney, Hawaii and Los Angeles. In Samoa the newspaper is distributed in the main centres and where most of the population reside on the two major islands. Distribution in American Samoa covers only the main island, Tutuila, due to the irregular transportation to Manu'a Group of islands.

The target audience of the *Savali Weekly* is mainly government ministries, diplomatic corps and the business community, because this is a bilingual paper with more stories in English on government issues. The Editor said the *Savali Weekly* is 'more for the people in the town area'. *Savali Weekly* also targets the tourists and businesspeople from overseas. Copies of the newspapers are available at popular cafes, restaurants and hotels around town and at the ports of call.

The Editor of *Savali Weekly* said the small print run (500) is not enough to meet demand. In a day all the newspapers are gone. The small number of copies is due to budgetary constraints. 'We are aiming to have a circulation of 1000 or more by the next financial year. There are definitely parts of the country that are far away from town that do not receive the *Savali Weekly* because of the limited number of copies.' (Editor)

The *Savali Samoa* targets the rural areas, especially the district mayors and village matai, who then pass on the newspaper or relay the articles and information to their family members. The *Savali Samoa* is distributed around the country, and this is guaranteed because the village *pulenu'u* (mayors) come to the *Savali* office at the end of every month to pick up their bundles for themselves as well as for the matai within their villages. The Editor said the number of copies (3000) is not enough because this results in an average of 10 copies per *pulenu'u*. The *pulenu'u*

also pick up copies of the *Savali Weekly* available from that particular month, and they distribute these among the village matai when the matai and pulenu'u have their monthly meetings.

2.5

Audience research

The SBC CEO said the only audience research she knows of was done in 1977, mainly for radio but it also gauged some reading habits for the few newspapers then in existence. The SBC does not conduct audience research due to lack of time, funds, personnel and resources, but the CEO feels there is real need for a proper audience survey.

Radio Polynesia has not done an audience survey. It receives feedback from listeners ringing in and gauges the localities and parts of the country they call from. The News Director said the stations 'have a comfortable position as the major private and commercial players and an audience survey is not one of their most pressing needs right now'.

Aiga Fesilafa'i radio has not conducted an audience survey since it went on air in 2003. However, the CEO said:

Evidence of social change in what has been fixed traditions and cultural practices, could be attributed to the work of the church media and its extended outreach approaches using discussion groups down the church hierarchy and membership. The church hierarchy with one person at the top, the Archbishop as its leader, is also seen as a contributing factor to the success in bringing about changes and reforms in governance and social enlightenment and progress in the wider society.

Le Samoa's Finance and Advertising Manager said the paper has never conducted a readership survey in the markets the paper serves. Informal feedback indicates that readers in different localities and countries have different views. The older Samoan generation in overseas countries prefer more stories in Samoan, while the younger readers prefer more English stories, 'which is why we decided to divide the paper into two sections catering for each specific language'.

The *Savali* has not conducted an official survey due to the lack of personnel. The Editor said she would like to be able to conduct a proper survey:

What we do normally is just ask around when we are distributing the newspaper every week, and this is how we get the sort of feedback regarding the paper content, likes and dislikes of the readers and other information the public feel will benefit the newspaper and improve its standard.

The Editor said that these unofficial survey results indicate that:

The Savali has the most local content with regards a print medium because it has the least downloaded news from the internet, but the problem is we [the public] can never find a copy to read ... [with] comments such as 'Savali has more in depth stories on certain issues because it's a weekly newspaper and the reporters have enough time to research a story, but again we can't seem to find copies.' Our readers are also always sure to let us know of any mistakes we may have ... This is good because it shows that people do read that Savali and people do care about the content and making sure that we get our facts and figures right in the stories that we report on.

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2.6

NGO and government access

The SBC charges ST\$100 per minute for broadcast time. There are no reduced rates for NGOs or government departments. However, there are available commercial packages:

This depends on how media savvy and well the packages are negotiated. For example, NGOs can be better off paying for two half-minute spots to promote what they are doing than paying ten minutes at a high price for a very boring interview. Or having two-minute news item is better than paying an enormous cost to have the President of the NGO interviewed on TV for ten minutes. (CEO)

As noted in Section 1.5, Local Content and Community Service Requirements, there is annual government funding for specific community services. Any community activity outside those listed for coverage is charged a user-pays rate. SBC TV is developing guidelines for its community service program Lali (community notices, deaths, birthdays, meetings and job opportunities) where some of the community activities can be aired at a set service cost. At the moment, Lali is charging commercial rates for community-related notices.

Radio Polynesia has a set commercial rate of ST\$250 per half hour and ST\$175 for a quarter-hour program. Government departments such as Health, Education and Agriculture, as well as NGOs like Fa'ataua le Ola (Prevention of Suicide) have purchased time. However, Radio Polynesia broadcasts some community announcements for free, such as information on immunisation during a rubella outbreak that killed several children, cyclone warnings and campaigns on cleanliness and sanitation.

Le Samoa treats dedicated articles and photographs from NGOs and government departments as advertising and these are charged at normal advertising rates. One such example was an environmental campaign carrying two-page articles and photos over a period of time and funded by overseas environmental agencies. Press releases are viewed as news items and are used, rewritten or followed up for a different angle, depending on their news value.

The *Savali* Editor said the newspaper tries to assist NGOs and other active organisations by allowing them to have their press releases printed in the newspaper free of charge. *Savali* may change things like the headlines of press releases received but the majority of the releases are published as written.

The GPS sends press releases on Cabinet decisions to the newspaper for inclusion in the *Savali Weekly*. 'These releases, speeches are inserted into the *Savali* as is ... no changes are made to them though the reporters follow up the stories in the press releases that are received from the GPS.' (Editor)

2.7 Journalism resources

The SBC has five journalists including the News Editor. All the journalists have more than five years experience and the most experienced has worked in radio, television and print for 15 years. The minimum level of recruitment is Year 12 (Form 5) or Year 13 (Form 6) or University Preparatory Year.⁶

Two journalists have degrees in journalism (USP) and one has a degree in media communications (Auckland University). Two journalists have certificates in journalism from the Samoa Polytechnic. None of the journalists have specialist qualifications. One of the USP graduates is now doing further studies for one year with the BBC under a Rotary Club Scholarship.

No journalist is specifically assigned to do investigative stories. But some have produced investigative stories. The SBC did try to set up rounds but the CEO said 'this did not work as there were not enough journalists'.

SBC cadets receive ST\$200 a week, and a senior journalist receives a maximum level of ST\$24,000 a year. A journalist left in 2003 due to personal reasons, but most tend to stay for five years or more.

Radio Polynesia has one journalist, the News Director, with 10 years on-the-job experience. The minimum level of education required for journalism recruits is Year 13, a College Leaving Certificate.

Radio Polynesia does not have an investigative journalist, although stories on corruption often make their way into the bulletins, 'mainly lifted from other sources such as local newspapers with the sources acknowledged'. (News Director)

Journalists stay for three to five years. 'The recent news team left to join other news outlets out of what they described as personal reasons.'

Aiga Fesilafa'i radio has three full-time workers, including the CEO, who is a trained broadcaster, and six part-time presenters and programmers to deliver its service seven days a week from 6 am to 12 midnight.⁷

The *Samoa Observer* has an editor-in-chief, publisher, training and development editor, two news and sports editors and six fulltime and two part-time journalists covering the Samoas. It has two more journalists (both Samoans) in its Auckland newsroom. Experience in journalism ranges from two years (current cadet journalists) to more than 30 years (editors). Newsroom educational qualifications range from the university preparatory year certificates from the National University of Samoa which are the minimum entry level for cadet reporters to post-graduate diplomas in areas such as development studies. One journalist has a New Zealand national diploma in journalism, two journalists, including the court reporter, are studying law part-time through the USP Samoa Centre, and one journalist is completing a master's degree. The *Samoa Observer* encourages journalists to obtain qualifications in specialist areas. Staff turnover is not a problem. In the past two years two journalists left because of performance problems, and two moved to New Zealand.

The *Le Samoa* editorial team includes an editor, two journalists and a cadet journalist. The cadet has a certificate in journalism from the Samoa Polytechnic. One of the journalists, with a degree in journalism (University of Auckland), is an investigative journalist with training on reporting on the environment. The other journalist, with majors in sociology (Victoria University, Wellington), covers general stories including sports.

Le Samoa pays cadets ST\$150 a week. The journalists that started with the paper in 2000 are still working there.

The *Savali* has four journalists. Experience ranges from one week (new journalist, though she has six years practical experience in layout, advertising, photography and putting together the *Savali Samoa*), to two years experience (a journalist who joined the paper after graduating with a degree in journalism from USP), and the Editor has over 30 years experience. The senior Samoan journalist has various certificates from different media-related workshops and training.

Cadets for *Savali* require at least a high pass in the PSSC and preferably a certificate in journalism (Samoa Polytechnic) 'but there again, someone who hasn't gotten a PSSC pass or the certificate in journalism studies or something related will still be considered for they may have quite good and acceptable journalistic skills needed for the job', according to the Editor:

We haven't got enough journalists to cover corruption issues in depth ... it's a full-time job to which we would need to assign someone to really investigate matters properly. What we do though is follow up the beginning and final outcomes of any corruption cases that arise ... whether it's government related or not.

Cadets receive ST\$6000 per annum, senior reporters ST\$9000, graduate journalists ST\$14,000 and the Editor ST\$19,000. Government policy is that returning graduates start on a higher salary level. The Editor said, 'There's a lot of discussion amongst public servants about this ... whether sometimes the salary difference is rather too great between the graduate and someone who has had years of experience but it's a government decision.'

Journalists stay on average for six years, with some journalists leaving and then rejoining the newspaper.

Equipment resources

The SBC has computers, access to the internet, tape recorders, ability to telephone outside metropolitan areas to rural and outer island areas but only one editing suite for television. Cameras, computers and tape recorders are described as quite adequate, but SBC TV needs another editing suite so that news does not have to compete with programs to use the existing editing suite. The News Editor said a second edit suite would help to ensure that 'news production is not compromised'.

Radio Polynesia has access to computers and the internet, but has no tape recorders and limited mobility due to lack of transport and only having a single journalist.

Aiga Fesilafa'i radio has a computerised on-air studio and production unit. Equipment is considered adequate, but the radio station is looking at expanding its coverage and needs more-powerful equipment and software.

Le Samoa's journalists have computers and internet access for research, digital cameras, tape recorders, a dictaphone and telephone access to rural areas. Equipment is described as adequate for a small news operation.

Savali has computers with internet access, digital cameras, one manual camera, one tape recorder, shared fax with the MCIT and access to MCIT's scanner and laser printer, and the GPS makes its scanner available. The Editor said:

What I'd like to see is every reporter having access to his/her own tape recorder and camera all the time instead of having to wait until one reporter has finished using the equipment before the other reporter can use it. We'd definitely need a vehicle ... The MCIT has vehicles but they are unable to allocate one vehicle for Savali specifically like we used to have with the MPMC ... We have to car pool with the rest of the Ministry and wait for a driver to be free and many times you're late going to news assignments because the driver's already taking someone from another division somewhere.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

The SBC has three news bulletins on SBC Radio 1 from Monday to Saturday. SBC TV produces a half-hour local news bulletin from Mondays to Saturdays with a recap of the week's events on Sunday. The recap is a half hour to one hour. There are talkback programs on current issues on SBC Radio 1 three times a week. There are no current affairs programs, but the station does produce programs which focus on development issues. The two programs are Atina'e and Ete Silafia. They cover a wide cross-section of issues such as health, education, environment, women's issues, free trade and business. SBC TV also carries programs produced by NGOs and government departments.

Radio Polynesia produces three new bulletins each day for six days and these are replayed twice a day on each of the four stations. On Sundays there is a recap of the week's events, which is about 15 minutes long.

In addition to this, Talofa FM produces a regular talkback program on current affairs and social issues. The program, E Fai ma ai Taea, is produced twice a week. Some programs, such as live commentaries on important national events like National Flag Day ceremonies and major sporting activities, are available online, but not the news.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

SBC TV has an average of 4 to 5 local stories per day for six days of the week, with the same stories in both English and Samoan. The daily news on SBC TV is adapted for radio. Sometimes the television news voiceover runs unedited in radio news bulletins.

Radio Polynesia has 6 local stories in each of its two news bulletins on the four stations. Some of the major stories are updates and some repeated to make up the numbers.

The *Samoa Observer* produces an average of 15 pages of local news and views daily in English and Samoan, plus local sports news pages.

Le Samoa produces 15 to 25 local stories per language per issue. Some of the stories are the same, although not written in exactly the same way as in a translation. The paper has a set language policy that gives equal treatment to Samoan and English in its news coverage. This influences the space it allocates to both languages, with half of the space for the Samoan language stories and the other half for English.

Each *Savali* journalist produces an average of 5 to 6 stories in English and Samoan (one story in both languages, though sometimes there are different stories covered in English and Samoan) This results in a combined total of 15 to 20 local stories a week for the *Savali Weekly* and 20 to 25 for the *Savali Samoa*.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

The SBC's CEO said the current governance issue is the accessibility of television and radio news programs for views from the Opposition parties. According to the CEO, the Opposition parties have access but 'are unhappy if the government viewpoint is sought on the same issue'. She added:

There is a lot of improvement now with government opening up these services for Opposition viewpoints on a wide range of issues that have a better informed public on issues of interest.

SBC TV's Ete Silafia weekly program has been used as a way for the public to access information about certain policy issues, such as education, and for information on departments and services that are important to the public.

There is still, however, a widely held perception that the SBC's political coverage lacks balance, 'giving disproportionate airtime to the Government view compared with that of the Opposition'.⁸

Radio Polynesia's News Director said the station's news service makes a major effort to present viewpoints from both the government and the Opposition parties. Radio Polynesia was once the only mainstream electronic media that gave opportunities to the Opposition to air their views when it was difficult for them to access the government-operated radio, television and newspaper between 1994 and mid-2000.

The *Samoa Observer* has taken a strong stand on governance issues, especially in exposing corruption and the misuse of public money. It has also been a strong advocate for freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

Le Samoa cited media access by Opposition parties and giving voice to the minority. *Le Samoa's* Finance and Advertising Manager said:

Governance is a major issue and governance at the most basic level of society can have a lot of impact on meagre resources and access by everyone in the community. Media coverage of these issues and acceptance by the public can have a positive impact especially on the lives of the majority.

Savali's Editor said priority governance issues vary. *Savali* tries to ensure that it covers all government's issues or government's areas of interest with emphasis on *Savali's* governance priorities of transparency and honesty. 'If a governance issue of importance came up that wasn't necessarily an area of importance to government, this wouldn't stop *Savali* from covering it.'

Some donor funding has been received for governance content production. The SBC has received funding from UNDP to produce a documentary on HIV/AIDS, and other United Nations (UN) funding to produce programs on issues affecting women.

Savali has not received donor funding to produce media governance content. Some years ago the UNDP donated a vehicle to the *Savali* to be used for work. This vehicle was a result of a request by the *Savali* to be able to be self-sufficient and have a reliable form of transport to take the journalists to cover the news.

The national media association, the Journalists Association of Western Samoa (JAWS) receives funding every year from UNESCO for Media Freedom Day to highlight the role of media freedom in society. The topics vary from year to year and are chosen by UNESCO based on issues that arise during the year that impact on media freedom and freedom of expression.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

The SBC News Editor said personal interviews are the major form of news gathering, then press releases, press conferences, internet, PACNEWS, Radio Australia, RNZI and sometimes Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Radio Polynesia uses the internet to source stories of relevance to local audiences, interviews and press conferences. Press releases are usually broadcast in the news except when they are direct advertisements, such as new mobile telephone outlets and new music CD releases. The News Director said, 'However, these have found their way into the bulletins to make up the numbers due to various limitations in delivering a typical radio news service.' News services used are PACNEWS, PINA Nius Online, RNZI, Radio Australia and selected websites such as Polycafe, Event Polynesia and Pacific Report.

Le Samoa mainly uses interviews with sources, press conferences and press releases. The internet is rarely used except for research. Regional news sources are RNZI, Radio Australia and PINA Nius Online.

The *Savali* gathers news using telephone interviews, press releases and press conferences, following up leads and attending events and programs that take place during the week:

Savali doesn't do much downloading especially with the page number restrictions ... one journalist is responsible for the downloads when it is necessary to make up pages if we are left with an odd number of pages like 21 pages; then we have to fill in three more pages to make a complete [paper], and there really is no preference as to where the downloaded information is from, so long as it is a topical issue and it affects Samoa or is Samoa related ... so it's not really so important who it's coming from ... more so what's in the story, the content. (Editor)

2.12 Media access to government content

The media can access government material at the government website, and the press releases, speeches, briefings and background material are circulated by the GPS to individual media outlets and journalists' email addresses. According to the SBC News Director, 'They are useful material as sources, updates, but are sometimes late to upload onto the government website. In such cases, it is a lot quicker to ring up or go there with a camera or tape recorder.'

The Editor of the *Savali* said:

We can also get these things from the related Ministries and the Cabinet Minister's secretaries. Being a government paper, this sort of information is easily accessible to the Savali. This is useful for news coverage as it gives us more in-depth details that we might need to beef up a story ... also, we allocate two pages in the Savali Weekly for the GPS for this sort of

information and we put the entire speeches and press releases, notices and such on the GPS pages.

As required by law, the broadcast of Parliament takes precedence over any other program and is carried live in both Samoan and English on SBC Radio 1 and SBC Radio 2.⁹ If there is an electricity outage making it impossible for the radio to go on-air, Parliament is adjourned until the radio comes back on-air. Special occasions such as the opening of Parliament or announcement of the budget are broadcast live on television or recorded for broadcast later. Parliamentary debates receive regular television news coverage when Parliament is in session.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

The SBC's CEO said the main constraints on news production are lack of resources and equipment, especially for television, and, for radio, the lack of trained journalists.

The main constraint for Radio Polynesia is the limited number of journalists to get the stories for each news bulletin. Lack of staff and transport also has a major bearing on Radio Polynesia's capacity to cover news in rural areas and outer islands.

Le Samoa cited staffing as a problem, with only two journalists to cover the stories.

The *Savali* Editor said lack of personnel is not really a problem because the small team suits the small paper:

Mainly it's dependent on what's happening throughout the week, some weeks there's a lot of things happening and other weeks are pretty dead with hardly anything to report on ... no particular events taking place, but then this gives us time to follow up on other stories that we may have put on the back burner on a busy week ... and then there's the issue of having more reporters means having more stories means having more pages means having higher printing costs. Because it's a free paper, we have to keep one eye on the printing cost and of course more pages means higher printing costs, which we can't afford right now.

2.14 Threats to funding

The News Director said the SBC had received 'baseless threats' but this has not impacted on its content. There were no reports of advertising being withdrawn by government or the corporate sector due to editorial content. Being the only television service with a national coverage means advertisers do not have other options.

Government advertising has been withheld from private media. This was between 1989 and 1999 when there was political clampdown on the independent media investigating corruption among government ministers and high-level officials:

Using various kinds of threats including physical violence and expensive legal actions, withholding government advertising revenue was employed to pressure private newspapers to withhold news stories and news reports that were critical of the government then. This was purely for political reasons, and focus on the issue including international pressure reversed this. (Finance and Advertising Manager, Le Samoa)

In 2004 *Le Samoa* had 'a contract cancelled when a huge advertiser was not happy with a certain story about them in the paper', the Finance and Advertising Manager said. 'The paper did not pursue the issue as it felt it did not want to be dictated to by commercial interests and the paper's content be dictated by advertisers agenda.'

Le Samoa has been threatened several times with defamation action but no case has been filed.

Since its establishment in 1978 the *Samoa Observer* has faced many lawsuits brought by government and business leaders because of its critical reporting. The editor-in-chief has been assaulted by relatives of a government minister, has received death threats and an assassin was hired to shoot him. But the assassin did not go ahead with this and turned state witness in the trial of those responsible for another killing.¹⁰ In 1994 the *Observer's* office and printing press were destroyed in a fire described as 'suspicious'. In 1996 all government advertising was withdrawn. Its coverage of government corruption in 1997 resulted in government calls to regulate the press. In 1998 the government ruled that public funds could be used to pursue civil libel claims against media, resulting in more suits against the *Observer*.¹¹ At the time of the survey the *Samoa Observer* was being sued for ST\$1 million by the former chief executive of the Health Ministry over its reporting on financial mismanagement and malpractice in the ministry. It was vigorously defending its reporting in court.

The government had threatened in 1998 to cancel Radio Polynesia's licence as the station was giving airtime to the Opposition. The threat was made by then Prime Minister Tofilau Eli Alesana in Parliament to 'any other media outlet that would cause trouble'. In 1999 Radio Polynesia's Magik 98.1 FM, the only radio station carrying independent news at that time, ceased broadcasting local news in response to these threats.

After the death of Prime Minister Tofilau Eli Alesana in 1999 there was a change in subsequent government attitudes to the media. In 2000 the government's ban on the Opposition leader appearing on government-owned media (now the SBC) ended following a Supreme Court challenge. The Court instructed the Prime Minister to notify in writing all government media (radio, television and the *Savali* newspaper) that there is no ban or restriction on the Opposition.

The Editor of the *Savali* did not report any instances of funding being withdrawn. The majority of the advertisements in both *Savali* newspapers are government notices and advertisements, 'though we have a gradually growing number of private enterprise advertisements'. (Editor)

In 2004 the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister won World Press Freedom Day Awards from JAWS. The Prime Minister's award was in recognition of the change of direction in government policies to achieve good governance and accountability by giving the Opposition, and other opposing views to the government's, a voice in the government media. This included a balanced coverage of Parliament. The Deputy Prime Minister was recognised for his defence and promotion of media freedom in the country.

2.15 Industry training

Much of the media training in Samoa in the last 10–15 years has been coordinated and executed by JAWS. This has included sourcing funds mainly from funding agencies, raising local funds through the association's efforts, securing trainers and conducting the training workshops. These training programs were in response to identified needs such as the media and court reporting, graphics and design, marketing and advertising, and developing the vernacular newspapers. However, they have been one-off training activities, and JAWS does not have the funds for a full-time paid training coordinator who could develop this further.

In recognition of the need to address long-term industry training needs, JAWS initiated the current year-long journalism certificate course at the Samoa Polytechnic for cadet journalists. The catalyst for this occurred in July 1999 when JAWS invited the Prime Minister to open the association's office in Apia. In his remarks at the opening ceremony, the then President of JAWS talked about the need for a journalism and media studies course at one of the country's tertiary institutions to provide professional training to meet the demands of the rapidly expanding industry. The Prime Minister gave his support and included the project under Australia's bilateral aid to Samoa that year. Formulation of the project rested with JAWS and the Samoa Polytechnic, and an industry Advisory Board was established to monitor and review the course content regularly. AusAID funded a specialist the following year to write up the course material and later to teach the course with the assistance of local journalists.

In mid-2000 a three-month intensive course was established for local media personnel who had been on the job for a number of years but had no formal training. The Prime Minister was the guest of honour at the graduation ceremony for the three-month course, and he reiterated his support for the media and officially launched the full-time one-year certificate that started the following year with an intake of college students from Years 12 and 13.

The Certificate of Achievement in Journalism includes: Introduction to News Writing, Introduction to Interviewing, Media Law, Communication Studies, Computer Studies, Court Reporting, and News Gathering (radio, print and television). There is a newsroom module, which is a compulsory unit though not credited. For this students write up their articles for the Samoa Polytechnic newsletter *Tauivi*. The course involves the local media:

We bring in experienced journalists and well-known media figures to give lectures to the class. We also visit other media outlets like radio, newspapers and television and during the second semester we have a one-month work experience attachment for the students. What we are looking at is to equip the students with skills they can use to help them find employment ... we [also] encourage them to pursue further studies in the future ... to enrol in the Diploma in Journalism that we are preparing. (Senior Lecturer)

In 2003 12 students graduated from a class of 15. However, only two journalism graduates from 2003 are working in the media industry. The Senior Lecturer feels that the drop in the number of

students going to work in the media industry is a result of the industry's expectations of graduating students being too high. Additionally she said some of the students who had enrolled and graduated were perhaps not really interested in taking journalism to start with. Instead it was just a form of tertiary education that would look good on their curriculum vitae when trying to enter the workforce. The Senior Lecturer cannot confirm where the other students are working as there is no follow up monitoring, but she estimates that 80 per cent of the journalism graduates from 2003 have jobs, just not in the media field. The current President of JAWS said that the standards of the course need to improve 'as many graduates have struggled to a get a job' as cadets.

The Senior Lecturer noted that, while the course has good links with the media industry, 'there is much room for improvement'. JAWS always invites the students to activities, including training seminars:

However we need the industry ... to understand that this course is only a Certificate of Achievement ... we don't make reporters overnight. There are special skills that the student cannot get from the school ... rather it comes from the hands-on experience in the industry. Without the support we won't be able to produce the sort of reporters that they want to produce.

In 2005 the prerequisite for the course will include a higher level pass in English in the PSSC. Class sizes will also be reduced. The usual requirements for the Polytechnic are a minimum of 10 students per class, and a maximum of 15 students. Journalism had 23 students in 2004, but in 2005 numbers will be limited to 15 students.

The Senior Lecturer is currently designing a diploma in journalism to be introduced in 2006, when the Polytechnic becomes part of the National University of Samoa. This will include some changes to the course content:

Subjects such as Public Relations are not included in this Certificate Program ... when I started teaching this course, I realised there was so much missing in the course ... like we need to teach the students simple writing skills like headline writing, writing up leads for stories and other things. This is why I'm currently developing the Diploma in Journalism and we are looking at three umbrellas for that program ... one is for broadcasting, the other newspaper print, and the other one is advertising and public relations. (Senior Lecturer)

There are no set scholarships for the journalism program. Instead, the Samoa Polytechnic receives sponsorship from government, the media, industry and the business community for all its courses and then the Polytechnic Executive decides which programs will benefit from these sponsorships and scholarships each year. The journalism program was fortunate enough to receive scholarships in 2004. There were four full and four partial scholarships for the top eight students taking this course who passed first semester. The scholarship covers the students' last semester of tuition.

The Polytechnic and the National University will be merged in 2006 and the current thinking is that the journalism program will then be available as a two-year diploma and the certificate course will remain as a one-year course.

The industry itself tends to favour informal on-the-job training, rather than structured training. The SBC does provide some informal on-the-job training for recruits, but does not have a structured training program. Radio Polynesia does not provide on-the-job training and relies on the skills and experience people bring to the station. The CEO at the Catholic radio station is a priest and a senior broadcaster who was educated especially for the task. The Church also arranged for the other two permanent staff to be trained by New Zealand broadcasters in on-air presentation, production for radio, news writing and reading. The CEO listed additional training priorities as further and intensive training in on-air presentation, production for radio, news writing and news reading.

The *Samoa Observer* is one of the few newspapers in the Pacific Islands with a training editor and a structured in-house training program. It runs its own three-year cadetship for entry-level journalists. Successfully completing the National University preparatory year is the minimum requirement for entry into this. The training program combines on-the-job journalism training with online learning through the Center for Journalists at Ateneo de Manila University, the Commonwealth Press Union in Britain, and Poynter Institute in America. All journalists have their own computers and full access to the Internet through a broadband connection. The *Samoa Observer* is supportive of the development of the Samoa Polytechnic journalism course and takes students from this on working attachments. But it says Polytechnic graduates struggle to meet its entry-level requirements.

The Finance and Advertising Manager at *Le Samoa* said the paper provides on-the-job training in the first year to consolidate what the recruit learned during their journalism certificate.

The Editor of the *Savali* newspapers said:

We don't have official training programs, but we do help them along and show them the ropes ... we send our reporters and staff to relevant training that are offered locally as well as by international bodies throughout their time with Savali ... but I'd like to be able to send my staff out to more training when possible.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

JAWS has developed a code of ethics for journalists that is used widely in the industry, and the SBC has also developed a TV News and Current Affairs Reporting Manual. Enforcing and meeting the JAWS code of ethics is the responsibility of the media outlets in their day-to-day operations. Maintaining the code is also part of the training programs offered by JAWS, and is included in the course content of the journalism certificate at the Samoa Polytechnic. However, there is no industry-established complaints body to monitor industry compliance with the code of ethics.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

JAWS is one of the more active national media associations. It incorporates all those working in the media, including journalists, producers, printers, photographers, graphic designers and layout artists, camera operators and advertising staff.

The previous JAWS executive had the use of an office provided by the Catholic Church at no cost. The new executive (from 2004) requires an office for its meetings and for training and, at the time of the survey, had not yet received confirmation about the continued availability of the Church's room. There are office bearers but no permanent staff. Officers include a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, with four other executive members. The association does not have an annual budget and as noted above, relies mainly on fundraising activities and funding from agencies such as UNESCO and AusAID to support training activities and its efforts toward media freedom and the free flow of information.

In 2004 a senior member of the United Kingdom's Press Complaints Committee was engaged by JAWS to investigate the feasibility of a self-regulatory Media Council and to develop a code of ethics that specifically addressed the needs and aspirations of Samoan journalists.¹² The current code of ethics has been adapted from an American model. The consultant found that

the most common complaints mentioned concerned basic errors of detail, ignorance of the law, failure to confirm facts, corroborate allegations, or to observe the rules of journalistic confidence; and poor editing of articles or broadcasts. Fairness and balance were also issues raised in relation to editorial matters, and false or dubious claims in advertising material.¹³

He consulted with a wide cross-section of people from government, media and NGOs with a view to establishing a tribunal or a standards authority. The draft report has been delivered and is now being considered by JAWS and those consulted, including government. There will be further consultation later in 2005 to finalise the content and initiate moves to set up an authority.

The President of JAWS said the association has developed journalism skills and standards and, in doing so, 'placed the industry high up in the national agenda so that the media is viewed as an equal partner for economic and social development'. He said JAWS now requires basic equipment for the office to operate, such as computers, a scanner and printers. While he believes there is no shortage of locals available to run and manage the office, they would need training in building and managing a national media association in order to develop strong and cost-effective operations to deliver programs and maintain high standards for the media. JAWS' development of the journalism certificate at the Polytechnic is an example of the types of initiatives that are necessary.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

The expansion of the local media over the past decade created a shortage of well-trained personnel in the media, and meant that some of the people occupying senior positions were not always the most qualified. There is a need for systematic training of media personnel at all levels to ensure sustainability of each media organisation as local society develops faster. Providing quality training for all levels of the media is a solid start. But having the resources to achieve high standards is also important.

At the same time, there is a strong push toward commercialisation of the state-owned media, which will affect how public information is covered, packaged and disseminated. Civil society information will be affected to a large extent, as a user-pays system becomes embedded. It means legislation, policies and mechanisms will be needed to ensure public service content is delivered.

Other issues identified in the survey include the following:

- Commercial and political interests are realities that influence the quality of media content and information intended for public consumption. These influences will increase with the expansion of globalisation and a free trade regime and the possible entry of more foreign-owned media.
- Many training activities have been carried out in the Pacific, in different forms and projects and by different funding agencies, with varying degrees of success. Training should remain a priority and the pillar that the Pacific media relies on for its sustainability and maintenance of quality and high standards. However, training activities should utilise Pacific Islanders who have the experience, qualifications and specialised cultural knowledge to make training relevant for local media staff. Working with regional organisations such as PINA, a directory of regional media trainers could be collated. As part of this process, trainers could be assessed for further training, up-skilling and certification to be part of a pool of Pacific trainers to draw from for a range of training programs.
- Various Pacific Island countries have developed their own tertiary courses. Opportunities can be explored to see if media training programs can be extended to other countries utilising the USP journalism course through its extension services and locally based trainers to assist with delivery of USP modules and/or the Samoa Polytechnic journalism certificate.
- There is limited training offered to journalists, to identify and to actually understand the range of issues connected with good governance across the three sectors. There is also a lack of understanding among some media that good governance involves ethical reporting.
- There is a shortage of trained news journalists and this impacts on the standards and quality of news and information coverage. As noted earlier, this has been aggravated by the expansion of the local media and the movement of well-trained media personnel to management positions, leaving a gap at the intermediary and lower levels of the employment hierarchy. The local industry, through JAWS, has moved to address this problem by initiating an industry-based journalism certificate at the Polytechnic, but this needs time and effort to produce the quality required to fill the present void.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

The government has a central media unit, the Government Press Secretariat (GPS), located in the Prime Minister's Department, which is very media-active.

There are 14 ministries and, of these, four are regular media producers: the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC), the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, Fisheries and Meteorology (MAFFM), and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE).

Human resources

The GPS has three positions, the Press Secretary to government, the Deputy Press Secretary and a data operator's position, which was not filled at the time of the survey.

The MoH's position of Information, Communication and Health Education Officer is well established within the Ministry. The officer's basic functions are to produce media material to assist the department's information and public awareness campaigns. These include radio programs, television spots, press releases, posters and informational pamphlets, stickers and so on.

The officer is assisted by an artist/graphic designer, who is in charge of the design and production of posters, pamphlets and stickers, which are outsourced for printing only. The television and radio unit has three staff plus a Japanese volunteer.

MESC has staff trained to produce its media content in-house to complement classroom instructional material. There is one Principal Communication Officer, who carries out the bulk of the media content production. MESC also has a Community Relations Committee composed of officers

from the different divisions of the Ministry, including the Principal Communication Officer. 'We get together every so often to brainstorm ideas on educational and awareness programs we need to prepare and produce.'

MAFFM has a Senior Information Officer and an Information Officer in its central media unit, and information officers in each of its eight divisions. The central unit coordinates inputs from other divisional information officers in the Ministry. The Senior Information Officer said, 'While they work on their own, we still have a strong network through which we make available copies of divisional press releases and so on to the information officers for further distribution throughout the Ministry.' Two divisions, Meteorology and Quarantine, also have information technology officers administering their websites. The Quarantine Division has formed its own Quarantine Public Awareness Committee to look at awareness programs specifically for quarantine issues.

MNRE has one Information Officer. However, when he is busy, he can call on other officers in the Ministry, especially those in the MNRE Capability Unit, for assistance.

The following provides a snapshot of the media capacity of other government departments and agencies:

- Legislative Office: Has an information technology (IT) officer who administers the website (<http://www.parliament.gov.ws>) but this office does not have a media unit.
- Ministry of Finance: Has no media unit but it does have a website (<http://www.mof.gov.ws>) that is updated by an IT officer. Press releases are written by human resource officers or GPS.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: Has no media unit but its Trade Division does have a website (<http://www.tradeinvestsamoa.ws>) administered by trade officers.
- Ministry of Police, Prisons and Fire Services: Has no media unit at present; the Police Commissioner is responsible for all press releases.
- Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development: Has an audiovisual unit responsible for filming and producing all ministry-related events, workshops and activities. However, this was not operational during the survey period.
- Office of the Attorney General: Has no media unit. All press statements are released via GPS.
- Public Service Commission: Has no media unit but does have a website (<http://www.psc.gov.ws>) that is updated by an IT officer.

Government corporations:

- Samoa Water Authority had a media unit but it is no longer functioning.

3.2 Government media processes

The GPS handles government-media relations, serving all government ministries and corporations. It is used primarily by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Ministers for speech writing and press releases. The Cabinet Ministers rarely use the ministry media units for their own work; this is done either by the GPS or the CEOs of their own ministries.

GPS produces press releases based on approved Cabinet submissions and Cabinet resolutions (on average, five press releases a week). It also produces press releases for Cabinet Ministers, arranges and organises press conferences for the Prime Minister and some of the Cabinet Ministers when the need arises, and produces important government notices on behalf of the Head of State and the Prime Minister for broadcast on the public radio and television stations, SBC Radio 1 and SBC TV. The press releases are in Samoan.

The website (www.govt.ws) is continuously updated and administered by GPS as the official government website. It contains an archive and current files of Cabinet-approved and Ministry press releases, speeches, news articles, weekly events, Cabinet Ministers and their portfolios, a brief history and general information on Samoa and the government, contact details for the government ministries and corporations and local website links.

Hansard is available to the public for reading at the Legislative Office. As noted earlier, all parliamentary sessions are broadcast live on SBC Radio 1 (Samoan) and SBC Radio 2 (English).

Both the Press Secretary and Deputy Press Secretary (GPS) are executive members of JAWS and have worked together with representatives of the private media to develop journalism and journalists in Samoa. The Press Secretary said:

The Government has put in place the school of journalism at the Samoa Polytechnic to further develop the skills of future journalists so that in the end, transparency will prevail and all of government, media and civil societies are responsible for their actions. The media must in turn report fairly with accuracy and balance on issues regarding Government and government-related issues.

3.3 Government department media content

The MoH Education Unit has an annual budget of ST\$100,000. This is for all its multimedia production, incorporating radio, television and printed material such as posters, pamphlets, stickers and material for the newspapers. A major part of the budget is for buying airtime for television and radio as well as printing costs and running printed material in the newspapers for particular health campaigns.

The Ministry has an annual calendar of events and uses various media or a multimedia approach to maximise the exposure of the health messages. The unit produces spots for television and has a weekly radio program in Samoan on the SBC that sometimes uses talkback. The content focuses on prevention of non-communicable diseases and on outbreaks of diseases. Almost all of the television advertisements and spots are produced in-house and given to SBC TV for broadcast. Radio programs consist mainly of live interviews that are produced on-air at the radio station. These are sometimes recorded for rebroadcast.

MESC produces a fortnightly 30-minute radio talkback program on Radio Polynesia's Talofa FM station and the SBC Radio 1. The Principal Communication Officer prepares the questions for officers in each division of the MESC to discuss when it is their turn to be on the radio:

I will go and talk to the Assistant Chief Executive Officers in the division who is next on air, I ask them what they've done and what I expect them to talk about on the radio and why the community need to know about their chosen topic of discussion. The community needs to know that we do follow a planned structure and that we give the best for our students, we explain the necessary procedures that we feel they need to know about and prepare to answer their questions thoroughly.

The MESC also produces a monthly program on SBC TV, which discusses educational issues, quarterly news inserts for the local newspapers annually and press releases as required.

The press releases are also included in the newsletter MESC produces, of which 800 copies are printed.¹⁴ The radio and television programs are mainly in Samoan and any English language content is translated into Samoan also.

MAFFM produces a newsletter every two months with information from all the MAFFM divisions in English and Samoan. Only 100 copies are printed. The Senior Information Officer said:

Our current expenses in producing the newsletters is almost ST\$1000 every issue ... this is for the computer printer inks ... it's very expensive. We do however have extension officers at the MAFFM rural posts who make copies of the newsletter upon receipt and then distribute the copies amongst the farmers in the villages.

MAFFM also produces a weekly talkback radio program for 30 minutes on SBC Radio 1. This program costs ST\$130 per week, not including Value Added Goods and Services Tax (VAGST). There are 52 radio talkback programs per year. The Senior Information Officer is responsible for setting up a roster at the beginning of the year for each division for the radio program:

I don't tell them what topics to discuss ... it all depends on the division what issues pertaining to their sections that they wish to emphasise and will discuss and answer questions to on air. I contact the individual divisions prior to their scheduled radio date, and emphasise to them how important it is to use this opportunity especially since their only job is to go on air and answer the queries related to their work and the topic of discussion for that particular week ... while it is my section that is paying for the radio programme. I have looked at the possibility of holding a similar talkback program with the private radio station (FM) but it all depends on the budget.¹⁵

The Senior Information Officer is also responsible for awareness materials such as posters, information leaflets, and the preparation and promotion of the annual World Food Day Celebrations and the Agriculture Show held every two years.

The MAFFM Information Officer produces press releases when the need arises. Each division makes available its own press releases on issues of importance. Sometimes the Information Officer goes

out to interview and film farmers, fishermen and plantation owners for Ministry files and use in documentaries on agricultural issues that may be produced by other interested parties.

With the emphasis on effective and efficient quarantine services, the Quarantine Division utilises the media a lot through press releases, paid columns in newspapers and regular advertisements on television and radio. It produces a quarterly pamphlet to promote its services, as the country will adopt open trade when it becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

As mentioned, two divisions of the Ministry have websites: Meteorology and Quarantine. The Quarantine website is funded by the ISP. The Information Officer believes they need 'a main website for the whole Ministry to be administered by the Information Unit'.

The MNRE's Information Officer produces brief information programs on SBC TV. The Information Officer also works with companies that wish to work in collaboration with MNRE to produce documentaries on environmental issues and other factors related to the Ministry:

I monitor all the documentaries that are produced in collaboration with MNRE, ensure that the necessary contracts are signed and I provide the companies with the information we expect to be portrayed in the documentaries they will be making. Before the final product goes out, I also edit the content to fall in line with MNRE purposes.

The television programs and documentaries are in both Samoan and English. There are times when specific information and technical terms are given in English only

The Information Officer is also in charge of organising the MNRE's radio programs. These are broadcast every week for 30 minutes. The radio programs are in two formats: there is the live talkback show and also a prerecorded program. 'At the moment we have a package with SBC Radio 1 only but Radio Polynesia FM has asked us to sign up with them also.' The radio program is only in Samoan because the Ministry estimates that 75 per cent of its listeners and 'those who call back to ask questions and make comments on the radio show are actually from the remote rural areas, so we try and cater specifically to these people'.

The Information Officer also collects information from different divisions and disseminates it to create public awareness about MNRE activities and issues. He provides all the information for the Ministry website:

An important event that I produce all the media content for is the annual National Environment Week. This is the one week that I try as much as possible through radio programs, television talkback shows, press releases, promotional television gimmicks prior to this Week to make the community aware of all the MNRE developments, projects that have been achieved throughout the year and its benefits to the people of Samoa. This is the highlight of what the MNRE has been doing throughout the year. Every now and then I am also called upon to write up news briefs about MNRE activities which we send to interested newspapers for publication.

3.4 Media governance priorities

The Press Secretary of the GPS said the key areas of interest for government are education and health, as laid out in its Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS). However, all areas concerning the country and its people are of vital importance to government:

It is difficult to pinpoint particular issues that Government may wish to place more emphasis on because the papers discussed, submitted and approved by Cabinet weekly come from the 13 different Ministries ... these in turn get written up as press releases by the GPS and distributed nationally and internationally from there ... ensuring that there is a balance in coverage of all issues which are Government's focus for that week.

The media governance priorities for the other departments surveyed are outlined in Section 3.3, Government Department Media Content.

3.5 Target audiences

GPS targets everyone with its content and many of its press releases are used by the media. According to the Press Secretary, the GPS phone lines start ringing after press releases are distributed, both from media requiring more information, especially on sensitive issues, and from members of the public who have heard or read the releases and want to seek clarification on issues referred to in them. Feedback on the press releases is also received by electronic mail or fax messages, and on the government website through emails from those who visit the website.

Health targets some selected audiences but usually its media programs target the general public.

For the newsletters MESC targets teachers and students: 'Some of the public are now interested in receiving copies of the newsletter, but we have to limit copies due to our budget.' The radio program targets the community, the school committees and the parents: 'Many of the issues are about school children and what they are doing in school.' The Principal Communication Officer said:

The town people prefer the television program while those in the most rural areas would rather listen to the radio program. We've found that we've really had to make a compromise in this because as the town people like the television program, we've found it's hard to say enough on the television, [which] is also more expensive rather than on the radio.

MAFFM's main focus is farmers and fishermen in the rural areas. The newsletter is only for the MAFFM stakeholders such as farmers, NGOs, relevant companies, corporations and ministries, as well as the MAFFM divisions. The Senior Information Officer said, 'We do not print out the newsletter for media especially. However, we do make it available here at the office when they request it.' The media unit gets feedback from people who listen to the talkback radio programs or are able to get copies of the newsletters and press releases. It also gets feedback indirectly from the extension officers who distribute the newsletter.

MNRE's media content is targeted at everyone, according to the Information Officer: 'It's not just for one type of people, because the environment and people directly influence each other.'

3.6 Qualifications and training

The GPS Press Secretary said GPS information officers must be loyal to whatever government they will be serving:

This is something that goes hand in hand with whatever degrees or qualifications they have in this particular field. There is a need for the officers to have journalistic or public relations qualifications and experience. It is important for the officers to have good communications and news reporting skills. Another vital factor that is taken into consideration is the ability for the officers to have to be able to report and produce news information in both English and Samoan. Writing and reporting articles as well as press releases in the Samoan language differs immensely from the English type of news reporting ... news angles which are of priority in the English reporting is different when reporting in Samoan ... the formats of both types of reporting are different. For GPS, experience is regarded as a priority instead, as well as the officer's mass communication skills.

The Press Secretary has completed the intensive three-month journalism course offered by the Samoa Polytechnic and obtained a certificate in journalism. The Deputy Press Secretary also has a certificate in journalism from the Polytechnic, as well as a short-course certificate in news writing from Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT now Auckland University of Technology), and one and a half years toward a Bachelor of Communications from AIT, a certificate in public affairs reporting from the Centre for International Journalism (University of Queensland) and a certificate in graphic design (National University of Samoa).

For the Ministry of Health, the minimum qualification is usually Year 12 (Form 5). Some of the officers in the media unit have received training in Japan as part of the Japanese equipment and training package for the Ministry's Health Education programs. The Principal Information Officer said that health information is a specialised field and needs specialised knowledge to produce materials that are effective and useful to the public.

Training for the officers in the Health unit is mainly in-house, provided by those who have had training in Japan, the SPC in Suva and other media outlets in countries such as New Zealand and Australia. According to the Principal Information Officer, 'The Samoa Polytechnic is just developing a course that offers only very basic level training in these areas and needs a few more years in order to come up with anything to meet the level required for people to work in these areas.' She emphasised the need for further media training of staff and a consistent hierarchy within the unit to ensure continuity of the unit's work.

The Information Officer said training needs to be an ongoing process. Training in all facets of the media, radio, television and print is required especially for personnel in these units not fully employed by the media. From conceptualising, scripting, shooting, camera work, editing, voiceovers and audio compilation and editing, vision editing, and so on. Training is also required in

graphics and printing. 'Technical training in the use and maintenance of the equipment is just as important especially when multi-skilling is a must for small media units such as this outfit.'

MESC requires personnel who have experience with the work involved rather than personnel with specific qualifications. The Principal Communication Officer said, 'We require people with good communications skills and who have experience in community building because that's the essence of job ... it's communicating and relaying to the communities in a way that as we pass on information we are also passing on skills and know how.'

The Principal Communication Officer has not received any formal media training since joining the MESC Information section, except for the one week she spent with Radio Polynesia FM and the other week at SBC TV as part of her orientation program 'finding out how the reporters go about their jobs as well as the production of media programs'.

The officer would like training in software programs to enhance the production of the newsletters. She also said:

For new information officers that would come in, I would think the important training would be how to disseminate information using methods that I myself see as being practical and reliable methods. I would insist that they work also with representatives of the community from which we can get feedback on the effectiveness of our programmes and how we can improve on these productions. It's always better to hear directly from the target audience rather than us just sitting here and trying to interpret whether they got the message based on our own evaluations.

MAFFM's two Information Officers in the central media unit do not have qualifications in media or journalism. One officer was previously the Information Officer for the Ministry of Women's Affairs and gained her experience from there. The Ministry encourages the officers to attend relevant local training, such as a workshop on radio program production and JAWS-initiated training during the PINA Convention held in Samoa.

In terms of additional media training priorities, the Senior Information Officer said:

When every information officer starts working with the Ministry, he/she is given a form to fill out specifying what areas they felt they needed training for ... I don't know what's happened to these forms. However if relevant training comes up, some of us get picked to participate.

The MNRE Information Officer said that the recruitment of information officers has been based on experience rather than specific media qualifications:

However, any information unit can only go so far if its officers do not have some form of qualification that is related to the work they are required to carry out. It would make it easier for any information unit to push for more development if the Government superiors see that the personnel behind the initiating wheel are qualified people also with experience who know what they're asking for and can justify why they need to move forward.

The Information Officer has had some training opportunities 'but I feel it is not sufficient for the level that I want to reach to improve my work and the finished products especially in film productions'. He would like more training in radio production, film-making, and public relations skills:

Public Relations skills are really important in my line of work because of the relationship you have to build with the people you're going to be dealing with and whom you're targeting. You have to understand their needs, wants and how they would better understand the information that you are providing for them.

There has been no media awareness training for the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers or parliamentarians. The Press Secretary said, 'Though a good initiative, I think it would be difficult to bring across and instil in the older parliamentarians the necessary skills needed when queried by the media. Maybe in the future it would be feasible, but not right now.'

3.7 Equipment

GPS has two computers, with only one having internet access for the administration of the government official website, direct telephone lines, one fax line (which is currently working but not in use as GPS is awaiting a new fax machine), two mini-cassette recorders for interviews, one of which is personally owned, and a heavy-duty photocopier for distribution of press releases, speeches and other information sheets of importance, and one after-hours mobile phone.

The Press Secretary said the equipment is not adequate and this is due to lack of funding:

What we really need is a vehicle so that we can cover all the Government events and report back to the media, the government and the people as it is expected. GPS was expecting to obtain a digital camera this year but due to budget cuts from the Ministry of Finance, we now have to wait until the next financial year and hope there will be an allocation for it then. GPS also needs a small radio to be able to hear the Parliament Sessions when we are not able to attend the sessions and to be aware of the news, issues discussed on talkback shows and concerns of the public aired on the radio airwaves. GPS also needs a new fax machine to replace its old one that was written off last year.

Health has two digital cameras, editing equipment, a vision mixer and an audio studio for sound mixing and recording. There are no hand-held tape recorders for field interviews. It is well equipped for television advertisements, spots and programs and can adequately produce radio programs. What cannot be produced in-house is done at the SBC. However, there is only one computer for the design and graphic arts work, which is not adequate as it is also used for office and administration work.

MESC has a computer and printer, a camera funded by AusAID, fax machine and internet access.

MAFFM's central Information Unit has computers and printers but no internet access. The officers have to use the CEO's internet. There is also a tape recorder and video camera and a digital camera (currently not working), but there is a Ministry digital camera that is available for use by every MAFFM division when necessary. The Ministry used to have its own editing suite for radio production but it is outdated and no longer in use. The Senior Information Officer said the equipment would be more effective if it was up to date.

MNRE's Information Officer has a Macintosh computer; a digital camera, still photo camera, video camera and editing machine for film production. The direct phone line and the fax line belongs to the Ministry:

I am in charge of all this equipment and should other divisions need it for their use, I am responsible for providing them with an approval form — when they take out the equipment and when they must have it back in. I also have a videotape archive for all the documentaries, promos and recorded tapes of the radio programmes. Most of the written information and ads and notices are all stored on my computer. MNRE also has an Information Resource Centre which we pass on our press releases, newspaper articles to.

The radio program is prerecorded at MNRE. The Information Officer described the equipment as very limited:

I can barely produce effective work with it ... that's why MNRE has to contract out the production of documentaries to companies that have the equipment necessary to make first-grade productions. With technology fast moving ahead, I need to go with the flow with regards my own equipment.

3.8 Government–media relationships

The GPS is one of the most media-active government press units included the survey. According to the GPS Press Secretary:

Most if not all of the local newspapers include our press releases in the local news sections of their papers without any changes and the radio stations read the releases word for word. This is the same thing that is done by the Samoan radio stations, websites, newspapers that are based overseas.

We also receive phone calls from regional-based news organisations that we electronically distribute our press releases to. This is proof that even these overseas reporters are interested in what is happening here in our country and how Government deals with the different issues at hand.

There are also a number of government ministries that produce media content and see this as part of their role.

Government–media relationships in Samoa have improved considerably since the late 1990s, with the easing of government restrictions on opposition media coverage, and government support for media industry development and the journalism certificate at the Samoa Polytechnic.

3.9

Observations on government media capacity

While a number of key government ministries have media units, the lack of a systematic approach to developing media units can affect the quality of the information and the content produced. Issues and needs arising are:

- Lack of staff trained in media production, such as writing press releases and news items. Staff with specialised knowledge, such as health, agriculture, development and so on, within the respective ministries are assigned media work and this can result in substandard quality media content.
- Lack of understanding of how the media works and the media outlets and their specific requirements, for example, briefing the media on upcoming events so coverage can be scheduled, providing electronic copy of press releases and images for newspapers to avoid retyping and typing mistakes. This lack of understanding is also an issue for senior officers who may not supply the necessary information to the media officers in a timely fashion.
- Government media units in the respective ministries need to have a clear vision of the strategic role of the whole ministry and that of the government, so that they can provide comprehensive information to the public on their goals and services. They also need to have adequate resources (funding, staff and equipment). If the ministry has no media trained officers, the media work could be outsourced.
- There is a need for the media and its vital roles and functions to be promoted and clarified within government, with particular emphasis on the media's role in promoting good governance. Key government media such as the GPS could collaborate with the private media and the public service media to conduct regular workshops on how the media works, and what is expected from the government sector to maximise information dissemination and coverage in all the mainstream media. These workshops would be aimed at Ministers, senior bureaucrats and senior government media unit personnel because their involvement is critical for improvements in this area.
- Regular, systematic training for government sector media unit personnel would ensure the media units provide the best service for their respective ministries. Staff qualifications and further training should tie in with existing training opportunities arising from regional institutions such as the SPC, bilaterally funded training and the national media course offered at the Samoa Polytechnic. As part of this training it would be valuable to produce and disseminate a social marketing media manual for the government sector. The manual could include information and advice on media training and; production skills (basic photography, camera work, editing, writing for radio, press releases and so on), as well as advice on recruitment and media management.
- In view of the proposed privatisation of the SBC, another critical area is the need for the government to be better informed about public service broadcasting as a tool for public information dissemination.
- An independent regulatory body responsible for licensing, which oversaw local content requirements and public service requirements, would also be useful, and could reinforce the need for local content development.

4.

CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1

Civil society organisations

There are at least 50 registered NGOs in Samoa. Those that work with the media on a reasonably regular basis that were included in the survey are:

- O le Si'osi'omaga Society Incorporated (OLSSI)
- Samoa Umbrella of Non-Governmental Organisations (SUNGO)
- Loto Taumafai Society of the Disabled (LTS)
- Fa'ataua le Ola (FLO)
- The Catholic Church

The following NGOs produce some occasional media content:

- Mapusaga o Aiga (Against Domestic Violence)
- Elimination of Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT)
- Nuanua o le Alofa (People with Special Needs)
- Society of the Intellectually Handicapped
- Pan Pacific South East Asia Women's Association
- Samoa Association of Women Graduates

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

OLSSI takes a proactive approach to harnessing the media to promote its work and to inform and raise public awareness on major environmental issues. For its village-based public awareness work, OLSSI organises and spends money to pay for media representatives to cover its activities and consultations with the rural and village communities. These are often held at the grassroots level and at remote locations. OLSSI however does not interfere with the media content each outlet produces on these activities.

OLSSI's regular media content includes weekly talkback on SBC Radio 1 and Radio Polynesia and regular press releases for the local media and Samoan media outlets operating overseas, such as in New Zealand. OLSSI also produces a weekly 'Green Page' (in colour) in the *Samoa Observer*. This is a two-page spread focusing on a specific environmental issue 'using an exciting simple writing style, layout and design'. This is published throughout the year and sponsored by selected major companies who see it as a duty or a community service. The cost of publishing the 'Green Page' is shared among five or six advertisers and this makes it affordable.

OLSSI sees good governance as a major issue and pushes for government to live up to what good governance means. The CEO said:

OLSSI feels there is a lot to be desired in the manner and approach that government consults with the village communities in formulating policies and legislations that ultimately affect the whole country. It feels a lot of the government's fiscal policies are largely driven by donor and foreign agendas and will have a lot of negative impact on the majority of the population in the long run.

OLSSI feels most government ministries and even other NGOs are undercutting the consultation process by asking only a few people to justify their own established views and approach. A lot of ministries and some NGOs are also undercutting the cultural practices [of having] vital and face-to-face consultation with the Village Councils. OLSSI feels [strongly about] undercutting these avenues in the consultation process because the ministries and NGOs say they are costly and takes up time when this is the core of the village authorities and grassroots level where any legislations and policies must consider their views. This is why OLSSI uses the media in a proactive way in order to reach as much of the national population to make a difference in their considered views when government calls community sectors for consultation on policies and legislations.

FLO focuses on suicide prevention and is affiliated to Lifeline International. It has recently coordinated a workshop for the media with experts from overseas on reporting suicide cases. The main thrust was to ensure responsible reporting on suicide to prevent copycat suicides. The society produces a regular radio talkback program on FM radio and has a 24-hour counselling telephone service:

We try our hardest to make sure that when the media does report on any suicide, that they report from the concept that helps the people instead of contributing to the problem. In fact, Samoa Observer and SBC TV [formerly Televis Samoa] have made resolutions that they are not going to [report on the finer details] any more, because I've lobbied big time on behalf of FLO to the media. (Director)

An Australian Youth Ambassador (AYA) is working with the Director on designing information, education and communication materials including press releases. FLO has also included in its workplan a monthly newsletter, and is aiming to start this in 2005, depending on funds available. However, the Director said FLO 'doesn't have any policies regarding dealing with the media and what media content it produces'. It hopes to address this in 2005, at the International Lifeline Convention in South Africa. The Director is going to request that policies regarding media content and working with media be included in the current FLO Strategy Plan, and for FLO to be invited to

relevant media training held in countries that have Lifeline centres. According to the Director, since FLO started two years ago:

There's now an obvious improvement on the decrease rate of suicide. FLO feels this is because it is doing a lot of outreach programs and awareness programs on the radio, but if the Government could help with the funding of these programs, then suicide becomes everyone's problem ... not just an organisation's problem. Collectively, as a country with Government taking the lead, FLO can get somewhere.

LTS has a strategic plan to produce content for public awareness and sensitivity about the inclusion of people with disabilities. It also operates the Silent World Theatre, a performing group made up of people with disabilities to bring across issues of importance to LTS and the needs and abilities of people with disabilities. The LTS members and actors produce the performances, and these are recorded on videotape, edited and filed.

The LTS Principal also produces monthly newsletters that are available to the public, especially for the parents of students at the Loto Taumafai School. The newsletters provide summaries of the weekly and daily activities carried out by the Society and students in the school. The number of copies is 20 to 50, depending on issues to be covered. In addition to producing brochures for the community-based awareness programs annually, LTS occasionally uses radio and talkback for events like International Day for People with Disabilities.

The Society is pushing for a Disability Action Taskforce to be established under the Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The President said:

What we're trying to move out of is a charity based view of disability and make it more 'your right' based ... like don't give us money and forget about it ... this is a basic right that has been violated so we would like the media to start addressing these issues.

At the moment, SUNGO does not produce radio or television content, but its press releases are inserted in the newspapers. The CEO said SUNGO wants to set up its own website with links to other NGOs, but does not have the funds. 'The website would also help greatly in keeping our sponsors posted of our activities and progress. We know too that we need to lift the image of SUNGO nationally before we can look at the international arena,' she said.

SUNGO does produce a newsletter. This was first introduced in September 2003 then it temporarily lapsed due to financial constraints and a change in management and has only recently been revived. The newsletter is monthly and 100 copies are produced. Half of its member organisations receive an electronic copy.

Good governance is one issue that is of importance to SUNGO, especially raising the awareness of NGO members about good governance issues. SUNGO also places high priority on the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and encourages its member associations to try to target key areas of these goals.

As noted earlier, the Catholic Church runs a non-commercial radio station which covers a range of good governance issues. The Church has also appointed a Communications Commission that is looking at ways of effectively using the radio station and the Church's monthly newspaper *Tautai*. The Communication Commission also operates a video unit that films and archives significant events in the church's development.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

OLSSI aims for the widest possible audience, including targeting children and students, with a language level and approach that captures these various audiences.

With the increasing rate of suicide among youth, FLO is targeting youth first and families.

LTS targets parents, the general public and donors. 'Through a survey that was conducted earlier, we've learnt that 80 per cent of people with disabilities are in the rural setting and so we're trying to get the LTS messages out to the rural areas more and next year we'll be focusing more on people in Savaii.' (President)

SUNGO's target audiences for the newsletter are its member organisations, government and the donors. SUNGO targets the general public through press releases.

The Catholic newspaper and video content is aimed at the widest possible audience and key demographic groups.

The five NGOs surveyed do not have formal mechanisms to evaluate their media content's effectiveness, but they do receive informal feedback:

Well, we get a lot of people who just come in to see us and we ask, 'How did you find out about LTS School?' or 'How did you know where to go?' and usually it'll be a result of something they saw in the paper [news extract from the newsletter] or after the Silent World Theatre group have done a performance or visited the rural areas and the people have either seen them or seen a recording of their show on television. Sometimes its people who have heard us on a guest talkback show on the radio or something like that. (President, LTS)

Just about every talkback program FLO has on radio, it takes only three minutes to come from the FM station to the office ... by the time I arrive here, people are already here at the office, especially people who tried to get through on the radio phone lines but couldn't ... and they're usually the high impact cases. (President, FLO)

4.4 NGO media capacity

OLSSI has a Senior Officer who works full time on the Society's public affairs and is assigned to deal with the media. He spends about 16 hours a week (out of 40) on media-related duties. The Society plans to employ a designated senior research and media officer in the future. The CEO said, 'To cope now, there is wide and regular consultation between the staff on media strategy and approach as well as with the CEO in order to have a common and informed approach amongst OLSSI itself.'

FLO's Director is also the media producer, and spends about one to two hours a week on media, including the radio program.

LTS press releases and news articles are written and distributed by the committee members or the LTS School Principal when the need arises, and the newsletter takes about a week each month to produce.

SUNGO has two full-time staff and is hoping to secure two more personnel. One of SUNGO's full-time staff, the Project Development Officer, is also responsible for writing up the press releases when the need arises. The officer and the CEO produce the newsletter. The CEO said:

SUNGO really needs a media production officer because the more awareness that can be generated of what SUNGO is doing and how it is progressing and assisting its member organisations, the more donors will be willing to fund SUNGO needs. SUNGO's survival depends on bilateral aid.

In addition to the radio staff, discussed earlier, the Catholic Church has a newspaper unit with an editor who is a high-level church administrator and two officers act as journalists and photographers and do layout and design. These officers also work on other church publications. Press releases, though very limited, come through the Editor's office or the office of the Archbishop, who is head of the local church. Articles for the newspaper are shared among church leaders, including the priests. The Communications Commission also meets regularly and acts in an advisory role, formulating policies for the church media including its development, expansion and focus.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

None of the NGO officers working on media production have formal media qualifications, although officers working on media production in the Catholic Church have undertaken a range of training courses. Some of the NGOs said formal training would be more relevant when they employed full-time media officers. However, most felt the size of their organisations did not warrant a full-time position at this time.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

SUNGO's CEO said that qualifications and training are necessary:

It's one thing to write a press release about an important issue and it's another thing to tell it in a catchy way that will capture people's attention and make them interested in reading it. The same is for the news briefs in our newsletter. There is also a big difference between a newsletter laid out by a professional graphic layout person and the newsletter done using what limited knowledge we have of such programs and designs.

A few of the NGO officers surveyed have attended some short courses in media production and, as noted earlier, FLO coordinated a workshop with the media on suicide prevention.

The NGOs said they would like to know how to use the media more effectively, and would like training in writing press releases to make sure they fit the format and style of media, website design and maintenance, and radio, television and print production. FLO's Director also said train-the-trainer programs were needed so that FLO could train the media in how to report on suicide cases and related matters without giving away details that could give someone ideas on how to commit suicide.

The Catholic Church listed the following print and video training requirements: press release writing, digital photography, manipulation of digital images for printing, layout and design, as well as basic skills in camera work and video editing.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

OLSSI has computers with publishing software to enable it to produce its monthly newsletter and distribute it online. It also has its own video camera. It relies on media outlets to produce material for print, radio and television for public consumption. The CEO said scanning hardware and software that NGOs can use cost effectively would enhance their work.

FLO has two computers with internet access, telephones, two cell phones donated by Telecom Samoa Cellular for the 24-hour crisis line and a personal camera. FLO 'desperately needs a digital camera ... especially for the purpose of the funders', the Director said. 'The funding agencies want to see progress and what's going on with the funding that has been given.' FLO's Director also said the equipment is not adequate for its needs. 'With more media equipment and perhaps more personnel FLO will be able to create a greater awareness of suicide issues and help FLO to reach more potential suicide cases and effectively change their minds and stop them from taking that step.'

LTS has a digital camera, a couple of computers and a laptop, which all have internet connection (sponsored), a photocopier (though photocopying cartridges are so expensive it has to limit the number of copies of newsletters), one cell phone and phone cards for LTS workers going out to the communities, and telephones (landlines). The LTS President said the society needs a designated media computer as the existing computers are used for administrative work also:

We would like to look at the possibility of setting up a website for LTS [and] the resources and software programs needed to produce quality weekly or monthly newsletters. This would be very beneficial because we would also need to translate newsletters into sign language and in the ideal world, having the sort of software that can do that would be great. We would really like to have all the technological equipment that would make communicating with people with physical disabilities much easier. We would need programs with a lot of graphics to make it more effective because often the language literacy skills of our target audience are quite low.

SUNGO has a digital camera that is made available for hire to other member organisations, a fax, direct phone lines, two computers and a small printer used to print newsletter copies as the heavy-duty photocopier had broken down. Fifty per cent of its members have internet access. The CEO said when NGOs purchase equipment from other organisations or government ministries, they are 'charged the same fees as everyone else', adding, 'This is the sort of thing [media equipment] that I feel Government should make available for free to small NGOs to help them out.'

The Catholic Church has computers with publishing software and a digital camera to produce its monthly newspaper, a video camera and some old and outdated editing equipment. The Church is exploring how to develop and expand its video capacity.

4.8 NGO media processes

OLSSI's CEO said it has developed and maintains a good relationship with the local media, and its proactive approach in sourcing funds to take media groups out to cover the Society's activities has had some success in placing the issues and the Society within the public domain. OLSSI sees itself as a media user and has a user-pays mentality with a conscious approach to source funding for its activities with the media.

LTS is charged the same rates as the rest of the advertising public. LTS has generally had good support from the media. The President explained:

When the media is invited to LTS events, they usually turn up, however we always have to call the media up first ... they don't take the initiative to call and find out what's going on. There's certainly reporters that we know are good because they do more investigative research into the stories that we give them and we'll ask specifically for them when we call up the media to

inform them of events or activities that we're involved in. We've had really good support as far as coverage goes ... the local media has also been very receptive to the appropriate language to referring to people with disabilities ... and this is having a big positive effect on the public in that regard.

One thing is that we sometimes ask the reporters that wish to do stories or interviews on LTS, to let us see the article before they go to print and we've been told we can't. This is slightly disappointing and it makes us nervous. This happened a few weeks ago and the tone that the article came out in wasn't really the tone that we had wanted. I can remember making a comment to the reporter that 'because we work collaboratively with government, we don't want it slamming the door on us' ... and what happens? The article that comes out the next day is titled 'Disability Slams Government' ... so that is the sort of disappointing thing that we've had happen to us after interviews and now I know why they wouldn't let me read the articles.

I think that a lot of NGOs, I know I speak for LTS when I say that we could use the media effectively if they were more aware of the power they have as an NGO, as a watchdog, monitoring what government and businesses and such are doing ... at the moment there seems to be a reluctance to do more upfront advocacy and lobbying with regards issues of importance to us. For our own part, we need to hold press conferences/seminars ... together with similar NGOs like Nuanua o le Alofa etc, Fia Malamalama to ensure that the media is aware of what we're doing.

For the radio talkback program that FLO has each week on Talofa FM it costs ST\$150 for an hour, including a discount of ST\$50 for the program. SBC Radio 1 charges ST\$300 an hour which FLO cannot afford. FLO has also approached SBC TV many times to be on Ete Silafia, but the cost quoted was ST\$100 per minute, which FLO could not afford. However, one of FLO's funding agencies has agreed to fund a FLO program on television.

The Director said, 'FLO received an offer from the Catholic radio station for free broadcasting of a radio talkback show similar to the one on Talofa FM, but because of the distance and the fact FLO doesn't have its own vehicle, it has not taken up this offer.'

SUNGO's CEO said for advertising purposes all the public and private media charge the same rate. There is no special rate for NGOs. The cost to get a press release published in the newspaper 'as is' varies. The *Samoa Observer* sends all press releases to the Editor, who determines whether the release will run as news and therefore be researched for a story rather than the press release being inserted. If the NGO insists the press release be printed without changes, it is charged the normal advertising rates: quarter page is ST\$153.56, half page is ST\$292.50, full page is ST\$511 (all are GST inclusive). Other regular newspapers such as *Newsline*, *Le Samoa* and *Savali* do not charge to have press releases inserted into their newspapers, however they do follow up on the press releases and sometimes run their own stories rather than the actual release. The radio stations (both public and private) use all press releases they receive for their news segments. Usually all press releases are read on-air without any alteration.

While SUNGO sees press conferences as effective, this is dependent on the perspective of the media. If after the press conference the media does not see the information from the press conference as 'selling news' or 'not of interest to the public', the press conference will not receive the coverage that SUNGO hoped to gain.

SUNGO's CEO suggested the media

Lower the costs for NGOs to put information in their papers ... even press releases. That's the only [way] we can ensure that our press releases go in the newspapers ... it's by paying for the spot, otherwise it's up to them whether they'll run the press release or not. On our end, we need to always remember to include the media in the activities that we do and to make sure that they are aware of what SUNGO is up to. We must also remember how important the media is to us and how it can be an advantage to us. This way, the media and we can help each other with the networking of information for the benefit of not only both parties but also the community.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

OLSSI has explored the feasibility of a community radio station and had discussions with a regional outreach institution based in Samoa. As yet nothing has eventuated. LTS would also be interested in community radio, but finances are an issue.

As noted, the Catholic Church has its own non-commercial radio station.

4.10 Funding to produce media content

Most of OLSSI's media content is supported by corporate and donor funding sources. Sponsors for the 'Green Page' 2004–05 are Nonu Enterprise Ltd, Aggie Grey's Hotel, Panamex Samoa, Polynesian Airlines, Carolina Rentals, Punja Wholesalers, British American Tobacco, Pepsi Samoa, Halecks Samoa, National Bank of Samoa, and Siva Afi Designs. Sponsors for the national advocacy campaign to implement the MDGs are the Government of Samoa, SUNGO, the United Nations, Le Vai Ltd and Computer Service Limited.

Other OLSSI sponsors include UNESCO for the Samoan Fale Project; Pacific Development Trust for the Traditional Marine Harvest Project 2004; Birdlife International for Manumea Tooth Pilled Pigeon Search 2004; the European Union Small Grants Project; Friends of the Earth, Australia; Pacific Development and Conservation Trust; and World Birdlife.

FLO will receive funds from the Canada Fund for television production of ST\$15,000. Part of the funding will be for a talkback program on radio.

LTS has a sponsor for its internet and email connections and use, Lesamoa.net, its ISP. There was an AusAID grant for the production of the LTS information pamphlets.

SUNGO has not received funding specifically for the production of media content. However it is seeking funds from the Canada Fund to provide basic equipment for media production so that it can increase media awareness and look at doing radio or television documentaries.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

- The cost of airtime on radio and television is a common issue with all the NGOs, hence OLSSI's proactive approach, knowing that the reality is that things are moving to a user-pay environment, even with the public broadcasting service. There is a need for SUNGO to develop an information and communications policy framework to assist NGOs better handle all forms of media and improve their access to the appropriate technical and financial resources to help fund and sustain their media, advocacy content.
- There are varying levels of understanding and support for media production among NGO managers, and this impacts on what media content the NGOs produce. Some of the NGOs do not have trained media staff who know how the media works and what content is required for specific audiences. They also do not have a good understanding of how to use media opportunities that do not require payment, such as news and current affairs. They can lack basic resources such as office equipment, telephones and a computer, which are all needed to communicate with the media.
- Training NGO staff in media advocacy needs to be coordinated to ensure continuity and sustainability. Such training should be coordinated through SUNGO and could include proposal writing to funding agencies for media advocacy projects. This training would involve mainstream media leaders such as news editors or sub-editors as guest speakers so they can talk about the content they require. As part of this training, an NGO media guide should be produced with information on how the media works, interviewing techniques for radio, and talkback radio, planning an effective multimedia campaign, advice on regulatory issues and media legislation.
- There is a continuing reliance on donors to fund media content, such as the production of videos, radio programs and printed material to support NGO advocacy work, and this is seriously impacting on the sustainability of NGO media production, as it tends to stop when donor funding ceases. Some of the NGO managers also make more effective use of donor funds for media advocacy than other managers, again highlighting the need for a better understanding of media operations and effective media advocacy. This lack of understanding could also disadvantage NGOs when they apply for media funding as they may not be able to demonstrate the necessary knowledge of media advocacy.

- As noted earlier, there is also a need for policy guidelines and/or legislation to define what constitutes public service broadcasting, and for this to include cost-effective NGO access to the media. NGOs could then use money saved from paid airtime on developing other intensive and effective media content such as television and radio documentaries and magazine programs on issues including the environment, domestic violence, suicide, child labour and prostitution, and the effects of globalisation and a free trade regime on island societies.
- NGOs also need a better understanding about how they can use private producers and media companies to produce media content to achieve the most effective results. This would be valuable for major projects where the funding has been secured.

¹ Sources: http://www.govt.ws/gi_listing.cfm; http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/samoa/samoa_brief.html.

² All currency in this chapter is in Samoan Tala. ST\$1.00 equals approximately AU\$0.49.

³ Source: Minister of MICT, Palusalua Faapo II, during previous consultations with the in-country researcher on media standards in Samoa.

⁴ See <http://www.presscouncil.org.au/pcsite/activities/meetings/asiapac/samoa.html>.

⁵ The Editor said, 'All matters from the Lands and Titles Court were made available in this newspaper because the Lands and Titles court rooms and offices weren't able to cater for the number of people turning up requesting information on matters of lands and Matai titles: Who's been bestowed this title? Who's been given this piece of land? Which is customary land?'

⁶ In Samoa Form 5 is Year 12 and Form 6 is Year 13. This is when the student sits for the Pacific Secondary School Certificate (PSSC), the College Leaving Certificate, before going into the University Preparatory Year, which is the first year at the National University.

⁷ There were no details given on journalism training.

⁸ Ian Beales, Draft Code of Practice for Samoa, Thomson Foundation, January 2005, p. 4

⁹ SBC Radio 2 broadcasts the English translation of Parliament and is only operational during parliamentary sessions.

¹⁰ Source: Training and Development Editor, Samoa Observer

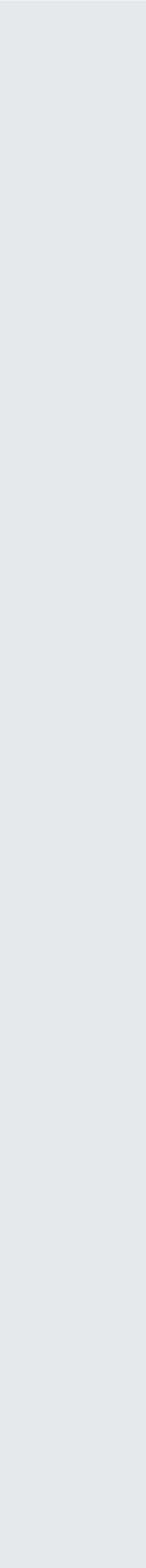
¹¹ Source: http://www.freemedia.at/IPIReport/Heroes_IPIReport2.00/31Sano.htm. See also 'Samoa Observer ordered to pay \$WS50,000', Pacific Media Watch, <http://www.pmw.c2o.org/docs98/sam1550.html>.

¹² Ian Beales, Draft Code of Practice for Samoa, Thomson Foundation, January 2005, p. 3. In addition to journalism, the code of practice contains codes and guidelines for broadcasting, advertising, and cinema and DVDs.

¹³ Ibid, p. 4

¹⁴ The standard price for producing 800 copies is ST\$12,000.

¹⁵ The budget for the radio programs and newsletter is part of the Ministry's annual budget allocation.



SOLOMON ISLANDS

BACKGROUND

Just to the east of Papua New Guinea in the South Pacific is the Solomon Islands. The third-largest archipelago in the region, the Solomon Islands is made up of 992 mountainous islands covered in tropical rainforests, some of which have been clear-felled, and many low-lying coral atolls. Solomon Islands gained independence from Britain on 7 July 1978. In 2004 the estimated population was 523,617 and is predominantly Melanesian (about 95 per cent), although there are smaller Polynesian, Micronesian, Chinese and European communities. There are at least 63 distinct languages in the country, with numerous local dialects. English is the official language but Solomons Pijin is the lingua franca for the majority of people. It is estimated that at least 85 per cent of the population lives in rural and outer island areas.

In June 1999 the Solomon Islands was placed under a state of emergency as a result of communal unrest on Guadalcanal. This unrest, due in part to the large number of people relocating from the island of Malaita to nearby Guadalcanal, spilled over into a coup and street violence in June 2000. An agreement between the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) and the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM) was signed in October 2000, but the peace was short lived. Sir Allan Kemakeza became Prime Minister in December 2001 and promised to restore peace and prosperity. But the violence continued and when Australian-led peace monitors left in early March 2002 conditions deteriorated further.

Following a formal request for assistance from the Solomon Islands Government, Australian and Pacific Islands police, military and civilian personnel arrived in Solomon Islands on 24 July 2003, as part of the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). RAMSI is designed as a comprehensive package of assistance. The first priority of the Mission was to restore law and order. Shortly after RAMSI's deployment, the Solomon Islands Government, in consultation with RAMSI, declared an amnesty for the hand-in of illegal firearms.

By the end of 2003 the military component of RAMSI was scaled down as the Weather Coast, site of much of the disruption, was declared safe. The conflict, however, has had a major impact on industry, infrastructure, the economy and institutions in the Solomon Islands. As a result, RAMSI has now spread its efforts, personnel and resources into restoration of the institutions of governance in an ambitious program of rehabilitation. This includes assistance for the media sector and the Government Communications Unit.

The Solomon Islands' economy has started to recover. This follows a severe economic contraction over the period of the ethnic tensions (1999-2001) and stagnation in 2002. The recovery is partly attributable to a recovery in exports of logs and the prices of other commodities and partly attributable to the arrival of RAMSI, which has dramatically improved the outlook for the economy. The majority of the population is involved in subsistence/cash crop agriculture with less than a quarter of the population involved in any paid work.¹

The Solomon Islands has one of the lowest literacy rates in the Pacific and this is likely to continue, as the school system is unable to cope with the growing demand for places. Thousands of children are not able to go on to secondary school, as there are no places for them. This is a particular concern because the high population growth rate means that younger people will make up an increasingly significant segment of the overall population. Communicating with this target group — the future decision makers and voters — will therefore be very important.²

The survey period in the Solomon Islands was from August to October 2004.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

There is no department in the Solomon Islands government with overall responsibility for communications and media. This task is shared between three departments: the Prime Minister's office is responsible for legislation and oversight of the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC); the Department of Communications, Aviation and Meteorology (Spectrum Management Division) is responsible for telecommunications and issuing radio and television licences; and the Department of Home Affairs is responsible for religious broadcasting licences.

The relevant legislation is:

- The *Broadcasting Act 1976* Cap 112
- The *Television Act 1995* Cap 116
- The *Telecommunications Act 1972* Cap 115
- The Draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation Bill 2003

The *Telecommunications Act 1972* Cap 115 includes licensing of community radio and television. There are fees for licences: radio and television broadcasting licences cost SB\$3000 per annum (around AU\$500).³ No distinction is made between commercial and community stations. No licence application has been rejected in the last five years. There is no legislation for newspaper licences. Newspapers only require a business licence to operate.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

The draft Constitution currently being considered by the government guarantees freedom of expression, freedom of the press and other media, and freedom to receive or impart information or ideas. It includes 'the right of persons injured by inaccurate or offensive media reports to have a correction published on reasonable conditions established by law; and the right of persons to be free from offensive reporting of customs and traditions' (section 39). Section 41 guarantees every person's right to access information 'held on or on behalf of any government'.

There is no separate freedom of information legislation, although there has been some discussion about this.

1.3 Media regulation

The SIBC Board sets policy for the national broadcaster and oversees it through its supervision of the General Manager. The Board is the government's appointed trustee of the SIBC. The *Broadcasting Act* Part V section 24 allows the minister in charge of SIBC to prohibit the Corporation from broadcasting anything the government directs. The minister (in this instance the Prime Minister) is required to report the direction to the SIBC at the next sitting of Parliament.

The *Television Act* establishes the TV Board and provides for regulation of the television industry. This is to ensure that television broadcasts do not offend public morality or taste. The *Television Act* Part IV sections 18–23 empowers the TV Board to supervise advertising content and the standard of programs. Part VI sections 29–33 gives the TV Board powers to vet material before broadcasting, issue directions regarding the content of programs and advertisements and prohibit any material from being broadcast. Applicants for television licences submit these to the Board, and the TV Board grants the licence, 'which shall be subject, in addition to the conditions set out in this Act, to such conditions as may be specified by the Board in the licence'. This may include a requirement to broadcast certain categories of programs at particular times.

However, there have been delays in convening the TV Board and, at the time of the survey, a local company, TeleVision SI Co Ltd Incorporated (TVSI), was still awaiting a licence.⁴

There is no specific legislation covering censorship of media content. The *Cinematograph Act of 1954* Cap 137 provides for a Censorship Board to regulate the public screening of all cinematographic film productions. This outdated Act is still on the statutes but has not been activated for some time.

1.4 Defamation

There is no defamation legislation. Common law provisions apply and decisions are made by the courts.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are no local content regulations. However, there are general guidelines for local content in the *Broadcasting Act 1976*, and more specific guidelines in the draft SIBC Bill 2003. The following is from the 2003 Bill:

Guiding Principles

- 6.(1) *The SIBC has an overall mandate to provide a wide range of programming for the whole territory of Solomon Islands that informs, enlightens and entertains, and that serves all the people of Solomon Islands, taking into account its great cultural diversity.*
- (2) *The SIBC shall provide innovative and high quality broadcasting, which reflects a variety of views and perspectives, satisfies the needs and interests of the general public in relation to informative broadcasting, and complements programming provided by private broadcasters.*
- (3) *To fulfil its public service broadcasting role, SIBC shall strive to provide a broadcasting service that:*
 - (a) *is independent of governmental, political or economic control, reflects editorial integrity and does not merely reflect the views or opinions of the SIBC itself;*
 - (b) *includes comprehensive, impartial and balanced news and current affairs programmes, including during prime time, covering local, national, regional and international events of general public interest;*
 - (c) *contributes to a sense of national identity, while reflecting and recognising the cultural diversity of Solomon Islands;*
 - (d) *gives a voice to all cultural and ethnic groups in Solomon Islands;*
 - (e) *strikes a balance between programming of wide appeal and specialised programmes that serve the needs of different audiences;*
 - (f) *provides adequate coverage of the proceedings of key decision-making bodies, including the National Parliament;*
 - (g) *includes programmes that are of interest to different regions;*
 - (h) *ensures the diffusion of important public announcements, including in relation to public health and safety;*
 - (i) *provides a reasonable proportion of programming on development issues such as educational programmes and programmes oriented towards children, health education, programmes about the environment and programmes including financial and commercial analysis;*
 - (j) *promotes programme production within Solomon Islands; and*
 - (k) *contributes to local cultural and artistic development through its programming.*

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The government, through the Prime Minister, appoints the SIBC Board with Cabinet endorsement. The Board appoints the General Manager, who is directly responsible to the Board.

The Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, or his designate, is usually the vice-chair of the Board. Currently, a government backbencher is chair and the Prime Minister's brother is a Board member.

As noted, in Chapter Two, Freedom of Information and Freedom of the Media, the proposed draft SIBC Bill significantly strengthens the independence of the board and its separation from government.

1.7 Government funding for media

The SIBC's 2004 budget was SB\$3m. With government funding of only SB\$400,000, the SIBC had to raise SB\$2.6m from commercial sales, through program sponsorships, advertising, music cassette sales, live broadcasts and hiring out its public address system. The cost of capital items (equipment) was provided by donors as the annual government subvention is too small to cover this. This makes it difficult for the SIBC to undertake the comprehensive equipment and studio upgrade that is required.

2.**MEDIA SECTOR****2.1****Media outlets**

There are eight media organisations and ten media outlets. Radio is the most important medium, not only because of its reach, but also because you do not need to be literate to listen to it. Overall, the Solomon Islands is very media-poor as there are only five local news outlets (four of which have limited distribution outside urban areas) serving a population of over half a million.

Radio

- The SIBC, the national public service radio broadcaster, is a statutory body owned by the Solomon Islands government. The SIBC operates a public service broadcasting station via AM and shortwave frequencies, and a commercial music station, Wantok FM. The AM service carries some commercial content and raises most of the revenue for the Corporation. Radio Hapi Lagun in Gizo and Radio Temotu in Lata, the SIBC's two regional stations were not operational during the survey period due to a lack of parts and fuel. Radio Hapi Lagun did go back on air at the end of 2004 (outside the survey period), but at that time, Radio Temotu was still not able to broadcast locally produced programs. The SIBC also has a subscription online news service, <http://sibconline.com.sb/main.asp> which publishes news in English.
- Paoa FM is a commercial radio station owned and operated by Solomon Star Co Ltd.
- ZFM 100 is a commercial station owned by XJ6 Co Ltd, which also owns ZFM in Fiji.
- Gud Nius Redio is a semi-commercial Christian FM station that began operations in May 2004. It is owned by the Honiara Central Church of the South Seas Evangelical Church, Rhema Family Church and the Church of the Living Word. They have formed the Pacific Partners Solomon Islands Association (PPSIA).⁵ It broadcasts Christian music, devotions, and religious content has no local news.

Newspapers

- The *Solomon Star Co Ltd* is owned by John Lamani and Associates, which as noted above, also owns Paoa FM. John Lamani is a local businessman and former journalist. The pioneer private paper is published five days a week, Monday to Friday, and 2000 copies are distributed daily. The *Solomon Star* also has an online news service, <http://www.solomonstarnews.com/> which reproduces most of the paper's news, opinion pages and letters pages online.
- The *National Express*, a weekly private newspaper, is owned by *The National Express Ltd* and its owners, Ishwar Narain and Richard Lal, are based in Fiji. It prints 1000 copies per week.

Online news

- The People First Network (PFnet) is a non-profit network within the Rural Development Volunteers Association (RDVA) and the Ministry of Provincial Government and Constituency Development. It was established with funding from the UNDP, and operates a rural email network that includes news.

Television

- Solomon Telekom Co Ltd is the holder of a television licence and the sole telecommunication provider. It is owned by the Solomon Islands government, Solomon Islands National Provident Fund and Cable and Wireless Ltd. It operates two television channels, which relay satellite downloads of ABC Asia Pacific and BBC International. Solomon Telekom carries local advertising produced by TVSI Ltd, which is planning to introduce a local news service late in 2005. Currently, there is no local TV news.
- Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) is a private US religious television channel delivered via satellite. It has no local news.

2.2**Radio and television program formats**

The SIBC's AM national service broadcasts on medium wave (MW) and shortwave (SW). It has a public service format with a range of programs from news and current affairs, to programs on women, health, youth, agriculture, religious broadcasts, music and commercial advertising in peak times. Most of its programming is local, produced mainly by government departments and NGOs that each pay for a 15-minute slot weekly. Its FM service, Wantok FM, broadcasts a mix of overseas, local and regional music and news bulletins. Wantok FM used to relay Radio Australia and the

BBC after normal local broadcasting shutdown at 11 pm. However, from January 2005, the ABC and BBC will have their own frequencies and will relay their signals separately. The SIBC stations broadcast in English and Pijin.

Paoa FM plays a mixture of popular music, including rap, reggae and Island music. It broadcasts very brief news bulletins in English.

ZFM 100 also plays a mix of popular music, with short news bulletins. ZFM broadcasts in English and Pijin.

As noted, Solomon Telekom relays international television content, while Trinity TV broadcasts videotapes of overseas religious programs in English.

When TVSI commences, it hopes to produce local content, to be interspersed between relays of ABC Asia Pacific on one of Telekom's two television channels. The local content planned is sports, current affairs, weather, shipping, airline information, a weekly entertainment variety show, and content from the Ministry of Education to promote its Reform and Strategic Investment program.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The newspapers are focused on national and community affairs, news, sport and commercial advertising. The *Solomon Star* described its focus as 'general'. The *Solomon Star* also publishes a weekend magazine within its Friday edition which includes longer articles that tackle a range of topics from personal profiles and human interest stories to news and current affairs features.

The owners of the *National Express* have told their staff that they want the paper to promote a good image of the Solomon Islands, and to include positive news about the government. 'Anything good about the government, not anything that tarnishes the image of the government such as negative reporting. But often we don't follow that because people have a right to know about how their leaders are representing them.' (Editor)

Online news service

One of the main aims of the PFnet is to mobilise the flow of information to and from rural communities. PFnet gives rural communities, for the first time, affordable communications with family and peers on the next island, in the capital city and globally, through access to the internet. As part of its information strategy, PFnet disseminates the SIBC news to its 17 rural email centres. PFnet also disseminates news from the Government Communications Unit to the email stations

2.4 Target audience and distribution

The transmission estimates below should be considered approximate, as a full-scale technical survey is required to ascertain exactly which parts of the country do not receive radio.

The SIBC's national AM service station aims its programs at all age groups across the country and uses a mix of English and Pijin. The SIBC's commercial FM service, Wantok FM, targets the 15–30 age range.

The SIBC estimates that its national AM service reaches about 90 per cent of the country via MW and SW. It is receiving assistance from RAMSI to cover blind spots. Currently, the shortwave service only reaches nationwide in the early morning (6–8 am) and all evening but is limited during the daytime. The SIBC has purchased another SW transmitter with assistance from Taiwan, but it is not yet installed. Radio Hapi Lagun's MW signal covers the entire western half of the country; and when operational, Radio Temotu MW signal reaches as far as Vanuatu. Wantok FM only covers Honiara and areas in line-of-sight.

The SIBC is the only radio station in the Solomon Islands to have its own subscription online news service, which it updates daily. This targets Solomon Islanders living overseas, as well as people overseas with an interest in the Solomon Islands.

ZFM 100 targets the 24–60 age range. Its MW primary transmitter is heard in and around Honiara and a relay transmitter ensures it covers the west coast of Malaita.

Paoa FM targets the 15–35 age range in Honiara and surrounding areas, and broadcasts to the same areas as ZFM 100 as well as Malaita and the capital Auki.

Both newspapers, the *Solomon Star* and the *National Express*, are sold at outlets in urban centres such as Honiara, Auki and Gizo. The *Solomon Star* used to be distributed to all the provincial capitals in the 1990s, until the ethnic tension reached a peak and scheduled flights to these centres became irregular. It is starting some provincial distribution again now as flights resume.

News magazines from the Church of Melanesia and the Catholic Church are sold in Honiara and distributed to parish centres.

This means that more than 80 per cent of the population does not receive regular printed media. This is based on the 1999 Census, which found that 85 per cent of the population lives in rural areas.

Solomon Telekom's overseas rebroadcasts contain programs for all age groups. Television transmitters are located in Honiara and the antennas are tuned to serve the capital and immediate surrounding areas.

In villages with generators, VCRs provide a form of community television.

Commercial FM stations are said to be the most popular with the majority of people who live in or close to the capital. Television takes over each evening at 7.59 pm, when the television is switched to ABC Asia Pacific for the young to watch their favourite series. This is peak television time. Many expatriates and local businesspeople living in Honiara also own TVRO satellite dishes and receive international channels.

According to the SIBC, those outside the FM station and television reception areas listen to the SIBC national SW service between 6 am and 8 am and 6 pm and 10.30 pm each evening, mainly for the national news and service messages (public notices). When the weather is poor, most rural people also tune to SIBC. Few people are believed to listen throughout the day at other times for two reasons: they are busy; and they conserve batteries if they have them.

There is no electrification in most villages and very few homes have solar power. Only three villages have round-the-clock power from hydro-electric systems, but this does not necessarily mean most inhabitants listen to radio all day.⁶

PFnet currently transmits information to 17 rural email stations. In order for the email stations to get information from the Internet, they go through the head office in Honiara, which then gets the necessary information and emails onto the rural email stations. PFnet's ability to break the normal urban-rural divide that impacts on the dissemination of information in Pacific countries is a welcome development and a promising model.

2.5 Audience research

Lack of funds and specialist researchers has prevented most media from surveying their audiences. The SIBC did do a short survey as part of a Pacific Media Initiative activity in 1999–2000, and has plans to do a survey for Wantok FM. The SIBC's General Manger said the station received informal feedback, which indicated the following:

People need more information about what is happening around them.

Need more information about what is happening in the rural areas and not always Honiara centre news. They want journalists to ask more difficult questions to politicians and not let them off the hook so easily

Don't concentrate too much on politics; cover other areas such as development news, such as successful projects. More news about the situation of women and youth in the country. Want more news on how MPs spent their RCDF [slush fund].

2.6 NGO and government access

There is no free media time. A 15-minute program on the SIBC costs SB\$300 plus SB\$175 for production, total SB\$475; 30 minutes, SB\$600 plus production cost, SB\$175, total SB\$775. A one-hour program costs SB\$1550. One-hour live broadcasts cost SB\$1200 for daytime hours (9 am to 5 pm) and SB\$1500 outside these hours. There are no reduced rates for NGOs or governments departments. Paoa FM charges SB\$1500 per 15-minute program on a contract of three to six months. Reductions for program packages can be negotiated.

Both Wantok FM and Paoa FM do have timeslots where community messages can be broadcast at no cost, but these timeslots are commercially sponsored.

2.7 Journalism resources

The SIBC has five journalists and one cadet. Two of the journalists have twenty years journalism experience; two have eleven years and another two have five years experience each. One journalist has a journalism degree from USP, and the cadet is currently studying journalism at USP.

The *Solomon Star* has six journalists. Two have eleven years experience each, and the two new journalists have a few months and twelve months experience respectively. Of the six, five have formal journalism qualifications: one has a degree in journalism from the University of Queensland; two have journalism degrees from USP; and two have a Certificate in Journalism from the Manukau Institute of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand.

The *National Express* has one journalist and one cadet.⁷ The senior journalist has 13 years experience and a Certificate in Media Studies from Nelson Polytechnic in New Zealand. She does some investigative journalism on corruption within government.

ZFM 100 has a freelance journalist who has 10 years journalism experience. The Station Manager, a former government information officer has an Advanced Diploma in Journalism from the Thompson Foundation, in Cardiff, Wales.

The journalist at Paoa FM is a school leaver with three years experience in journalism. His assistant is also a school leaver.

Most of the media organisations recruit school leavers with Form 5–7 secondary education. However, the *Solomon Star* did say that they would be seeking journalism graduates for recruits in the future. Currently journalism recruits require: Form 5–7 (*National Express*), Form 7 (Paoa FM), Form 6 (*Solomon Star*) and Form 5 or 6 (SIBC).

There are very few investigative journalists. The Acting Editor of the *Solomon Star* said, 'No one is doing [investigative journalism] as good as is generally expected but this is certainly an area we should have someone concentrating on because it is important for our country at the moment.'

The journalists' salaries vary. The SIBC pays SB\$488.99 (cadet) to SB\$1432.45 (senior journalist) per fortnight, Paoa FM pays SB\$500 per fortnight during the probationary period to SB\$750 per fortnight for an experienced journalist, and ZFM 100 pays SB\$10 per news item. The *Solomon Star*'s salary range for journalists is SB\$310 (cadet) to SB\$1400 (editor) per fortnight. The *National Express* salaries are SB\$250 (cadet) to SB\$400 (acting editor) per fortnight.

Equipment resources

The SIBC journalists have access to digital recorders, telephones, and computers. Email/internet access is limited and can only be accessed from the News Director's computer. There is no fax machine. Faxes are sent to the General Manager's office or to the fax machine in the on-air studio. The journalists do not have access to laptop computers, and only the News Director has a mobile telephone. Journalists can access rural areas using wireless (two-way radio) where telephone penetration rates are very low. Few journalists visit rural areas or outer islands.

The SIBC does conduct talkback programs, but it faces constraints in this area. The telephone is located in the on-air studio, and there is only one line and no delay system. To be effective, the SIBC requires a multiple line facility with a delay mechanism, located in a production studio outside the on-air studio where a producer can answer and monitor the calls.

The SIBC also conducts live panel programs with up to five speakers. However, the microphones are set up in an open space and patched through into the on-air console, as the studio console can only accommodate two microphones and the studio is too small for this number of people. There is no logging equipment⁸, and blackouts are a problem.

Paoa FM has digital recorders for actuality reports, computer editing, telephones and internet access from 9 am to 3 pm. Paoa FM reportedly has the best equipped studio and newsroom.

ZFM 100's freelance journalist has a pocket-size cassette tape recorder (not broadcast quality) and no computer. The journalist uses an internet café to access regional news and to type up the news and send it to the station. The journalist estimates that she spends about SB\$14 a day producing the news. Company policy is that freelancers should use their own resources to produce news. Therefore, expenses are not refunded.

The *Solomon Star* has computers (including a laptop), internet access, telephones, hand-held recorders and digital cameras. The Acting Editor said it needed four professional digital cameras. Currently it has a cheaper version as the professional model is too expensive. Their computers are 10 years old and need upgrading but 'we just can't afford to do that'.

The *National Express* journalists have four PC computers and a Mac, a fax, telephones, and two digital cameras, which is considered inadequate.

PFnet consists of a rural email network, an internet cafe in the capital city and a website as an information hub and development gateway. PFnet says its stations use a simple, robust and well-proven technology, consisting of a shortwave radio (already ubiquitous and well known in the South Pacific), a low-end computer and solar energy. The scattered and remote nature of many islands, together with the prohibitive cost of satellite options, dictates the use of HF radio systems in most cases, although VHF and microwave may be used in certain circumstances.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

The SIBC is the only radio station that broadcasts three current affairs programs, talkback and other spoken word programs daily. The programs are the Morning Report (7.05 am), the Midday Report (12.10 pm) and Wol Blo lumi (Our World), which is broadcast at 7.10 pm and 9.10 pm. Talkback shows called Talking Truth are broadcast on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday at 6.15 pm.

There are nine daily news bulletins in English and eight in Pijin. ZFM has five daily bulletins, cut from eight bulletins to reinforce the station's focus on music. Paoa's twelve daily bulletins are news briefs running for around 60 seconds each.

The *National Express*, ZFM 100 and Paoa FM tend to focus their news coverage on Honiara. The SIBC and the *Solomon Star* do attempt to report on news in rural areas, but lack of funds to send journalists to these areas and the lack of rural-based stringers impact on the breadth of this coverage. The *Solomon Star* said its journalists do travel to rural areas, but this is generally only when funding is provided, such as by RAMSI, as travel to the provinces is expensive.

The PFnet Manager believes people in rural areas want more information about what is happening in their areas rather than just Honiara-centred news. They are also interested in development news, such as stories on successful projects, as well as more news about issues to do with women and youth in the country. The PFnet Manager added:

The other aspect I would like to highlight is that the communities are now recognising that they have a voice to contribute towards any national issues. The current constitutional review for instance has utilised our rural email stations to get feedback, even RAMSI has benefited at the very early stages ... we were able to get feedback from ordinary people in the community to, that is, say their views about RAMSI which we published on our website. So people are beginning to recognise that they now have a growing voice to speak out ... a tool which they can use to speak out, practise their basic constitutional rights, if you like, for freedom of expression, and that's where we are heading to.

Some of the [village] stations now have quality news, especially Rarumana ... they have their own newsletters in which they share news about sports and all developments that are happening within their communities. SIBC is a recipient of those, Solomon Star, and all other wantoks who are living overseas pay subscriptions to receive those newsletters. And we also use those newsletters from the communities to put news into our website as well. So because of that, we have a growing interest in the outside world. For instance the Humanitarian Information Network has subscribed to our network for Humanitarian Grass Root News, which comes out of our website. And some news media outside of the country have actually extracted information from our website.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

The SIBC produces 12 to 15 stories per day. The English and Pijin bulletins have the same stories. The first four stories from each bulletin are rebroadcast on Wantok FM.

Paoa FM produces eight local stories daily, and includes two local stories and one regional story in each of its bulletins. The news is broadcast in English.

ZFM 100 broadcasts on average three local stories daily in English.

PFnet distributes about seven to ten stories daily, using stories it has rewritten from the SIBC and other news sources. It has an understanding with the SIBC that it can use its news as long as PFnet can rewrite it and then attribute it to SIBC. PFnet's Manager also said, 'We're trying to build a strong linkage with SIBC to facilitate grassroots news coming from the community stations.'

The *Solomon Star* produces up to 21 local stories a day in English, with the largest number on Friday, the weekend edition.

The *National Express* produces about 20 local stories in English for each weekly edition. This excludes the editorial and letters to the editor, as well as sports page.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

The SIBC's national AM service has produced a range of programs on governance issues, and received funding for some of these since 2000:

- July 2000 to January 2001, NZAID provided SB\$100,000 to the umbrella NGO, the Development Services Exchange, for an NGO Peace Awareness radio series on the SIBC.
- February 2001 to December 2001, NZAID funded a voter awareness series for the Solomon Islands Development Trust, at a cost of SB\$15,000.
- A Human Rights (SI) office set up immediately after the ethnic tension provided SB\$100,000 for a series called Give Peace a Chance, which ran from July 2001 to December 2001. The series promoted peace making, reconciliation and reintegration.
- The Human Rights (SI) office also sponsored a series on human rights called Save Long Rights Blong lu (Know Your Rights), which ran from July 2002 to December 2002 at a cost of SB\$13,125.
- Oxfam Australia paid for a series that looked at various international conventions the Solomon Islands government had ratified. This followed a series of paralegal workshops organised by the Regional Rights Resources Team (RRRT). The radio series focused on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); the International Covenant on Economic, Social, Civil and Political Rights (ICESCPR); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The programs were broadcast from September 2002 to July 2003. The total cost for the more than 100 programs produced was SB\$45,000.
- AusAID, through the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission, funded a radio awareness series from July to August 2001 that focused on election procedures and registration; the history of the government prior to independence; the history of the government after independence; the role of the national Parliament; the roles of a Member of Parliament; and the voting system in Solomon Islands. This series was repeated from September to December 2001. Apart from this series, which was broadcast on SIBC, its commercial arm, Wantok FM, also broadcast awareness spots from July to August 2001. The total amount for these was SB\$182,392.
- UNDP paid SB\$60,000 for a series on the Government Constitutional Reform Project from December 2002 to March 2003.
- AusAID, through the Solomon Islands Intervention Force, signed a contract with SIBC for awareness about the intervention force through talkback (Talking Truth, in English) from July to November 2003 for SB\$86,796.
- From January to April 2004 another contract was signed for the same series Talking Truth for SB\$38,725 and renewed for May to December 2004 for SB\$55,800. A Pijin version of 'Talking Truth' was contracted for SB\$7750 and broadcast from May to July 2004; renewed for July to December 2004 for SB\$17,825. The total for the program came to SB\$102,275.
- The Community Peace and Restorative Fund (CPRF), is funding a 15-minute Land and You series for the Department of Lands at SB\$20,995. The contract is for April 2004 to April 2005.

The *Solomon Star* has also received some funding for governance content, including funding from AusAID to run advertisements and other content during the gun buy-back period. The *Solomon Star's* Acting Editor said its governance priorities are law and order, human rights, peace building, accountability and transparency, and issues concerning health, education, women and children.

As noted earlier, the owners of the *National Express* are interested in promoting a good image of the Solomon Islands. However, following the appointment in August 2004 of a new editor, who changed the editorial policy from 'not offending the government' to including governance and investigative stories, the paper went from breaking even to making a profit in less than two months.

The *National Express* covers general governance issues, law and order, what RAMSI does, the economy, women, health, HIV/AIDS and education. The paper also has a weekly women's page run by a staff member. A priority area is health, especially HIV/AIDS and the increasing number of sexually transmitted infections (STIs):

We view HIV/AIDS as a threat that cuts across all sectors of the community, not just health. It will affect the economy, culture, population, everything actually. That's what we're trying to put across to our readers. Apart from that, there's diabetes, which is also becoming a big concern because figures show that out of ten people admitted, six are diabetic; there's also marijuana abuse, alcohol. We want to bring these issues out so that our young population, the future of Solomon Islands can understand them properly. (Editor)

There was some criticism about the standard of governance reporting during the ethnic tension. The General Manager of the SIBC expanded on this:

The media coverage of the fighting between the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) and the Isatambu Freedom Movement (IFM) of Guadalcanal presented a lot of challenges for the local media . . . In any newsroom you will find someone from Malaita, Guadalcanal and other islands in the country. Do we send a reporter from Malaita to cover a skirmish between the IFM and the MEF on the outskirts of the capital Honiara? Do you send a reporter from Malaita to walk through the MEF bunkers on the outskirts of Honiara to try and get the IFM side of the story? How would the MEF react when they realise that one of them, a reporter is going across their lines to talk to their enemies.

What happened was that some of the media only covered the MEF side of the story not because they were intentionally bias but because of the pressure the rest of the country was applying on them in that they want to know what was happening. In such incidences the media was accused of glorifying the war. Other quarters of the community accused the media of being biased to the MEF. This was not the case. Most media organisations could not afford to compensate the lives of any reporter if killed by either side. Demands for compensation for a single life seemed to have been set at 100,000 Solomon Islands dollars an amount which none of the media organizations could afford.

Until today I and my colleague the publisher of the Solomon Star who is also from Malaita continue to be accused of taking sides with the MEF. How could this be true when our own lives and organisations were threatened not by the IFM militants but by those from the MEF? These are the challenges that the media had to face.⁹

Threats to journalists in their workplaces also impacted on their capacity to work and on the running of their organisations. A few examples are detailed below:

SIBC: 'The leader of the MEF and his assistant came to the studio compound and argued with the General Manager (GM) about a news item the SIBC attributed to two men who hijacked a Solomon Taiyo ship from Western Province to Honiara. They said that the men who hijacked the ship were not MEF members as reported. The leader demanded that the GM follow him to their camp but the GM pointed out that the media was only answerable to MEF spokesman Andrew Nori, not anyone else, so the two men left. However, later in the evening, another two men — part of a group of men travelling in two vehicles — entered the on-air studio while the 7 pm Pijin news bulletin was being presented and ordered the presenter to get rid of the story relating to the ship's hijacking. In fear the presenter threw the whole bulletin into the bin but when the men left picked it up again and presented the full bulletin. He was not bothered after that.'¹⁰

Paoa FM: 'Immediately after the ethnic tension a group of militants came and demanded money from us. This was not related to libel or censorship issues. The men were unhappy about some comments made by one of our presenters in one of our programs. Luckily, management quickly stepped in to sort the situation out.' (General Manager)

Solomon Star: In 2002 a government minister and 'gun-toting terrorists' forced the newspaper to pay the minister SB\$5000 after the newspaper published a report, an editorial and a letter to the editor about the minister assaulting a taxi driver in Honiara.¹¹

2.11 News-gathering techniques

The SIBC News Director said its news-gathering techniques in priority order are interviews, press releases, the internet and press conferences. For regional and overseas news the SIBC uses

PACNEWS, PINA Nuis Online, Radio Australia, RNZI and the BBC. 'We take stories from any of these we think are of interest to our listeners.'

The journalist at Paoa FM uses mainly the phone to collect news, then interviews and press releases. 'I don't rely on press releases because they can come in at any time.' For regional and overseas news the journalist accesses RNZI or the ABC.

The *Solomon Star's* Acting Editor said the paper relies mostly on interviews, the internet and sometimes people who turn up at the office. 'We do not want to use press releases too much because they only give us what those releasing them want us to report. That's why we want more personal interviews.' The *Solomon Star* also uses PACNEWS, Agence France-Presse (AFP), the BBC and the ABC. News Ltd is its preferred source for overseas and regional news as the *Solomon Star* has an understanding with the *Post Courier* and the *Fiji Times* to feed each other with news 'if someone important from the Solomon Islands travels to either of the two countries'. The newspaper is able to access the News Ltd material free of charge.

The *National Express* Editor said:

We interview anyone that has any interesting news. If we hear or know whatever interesting thing a person does, we would go and conduct interviews ... from high-ranking government officials to the grassroots level. We don't use press releases too much because we're a weekly paper. If we rely on press releases, then our newspaper will be out of date so we have to be more investigative and try to cover issues which are not being covered by the other paper.

PFnet news consists of SIBC news and face-to-face interviews.

2.12 Media access to government content

The government does not post speeches or policies on the website and few government officials have internet access. While Hansard is available and parliament is broadcast, the flow of information from government is generally ad hoc and journalists report that it is difficult to question government about critical issues.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

A range of factors influence the number of stories produced.

The SIBC has a small number of staff, equipment limitations and variable quality equipment. This improved at the end of 2004 when RAMSI funded six mini-disk recorders for the newsroom and programs division. However, the number of staff in the newsroom is still low, and the station has lacked the capacity to provide training for mid to senior level journalists in specialist areas and investigative journalism.

Paoa FM has only one journalist and one assistant, and telephone, internet and fax availability is limited. Other factors which shape the amount of news are the amount of advertising and the short time available for news bulletins.

For the *National Express*, the state of the economy has limited the number of staff that can be hired.

The Acting Editor *Solomon Star* said, 'Advertising is good when more good local stories are reported. People like to read about what's happening around them. What affects them locally.'

2.14 Threats to funding

The economic viability of the Solomon Islands media has been affected by the years of civil disruption. The shrinkage of the economy and the advertising market impacted on all media. In addition to this, the collapse of the Solomon Islands' government's finances resulted in a loss of revenue for the SIBC and a reduction in staff numbers.

2.15 Industry training

There is very little on-the-job training currently provided. The SIBC provides some training for high school recruits in news writing, but this is not structured or systematic. As noted, it does not have a well articulated staff development policy for mid to senior level journalists.

Paoa FM and ZFM provide no on-the-job journalism training. The journalist at Paoa FM said he needs basic training in how to write news and editing:

A few workshops have been conducted in-country. The two PNG Media Council ones last year have been my only exposure to these issues. So basically the training that newsroom staff need is on how to write news, understand the ethics of journalism and the media in general.

The SIBC's General Manager has provided training to PFnet staff in how to write news:

The workshops covered how to recognise what is news ... what is not news. And also, just basic skills in writing news. We also consider the level of education that our operators have attained — so that is one of the considerations given. This is that some of the rural PFnet operators did not have very good education. Most are either Standard 6 [six years primary schooling] or Form 3 [six years primary and three years secondary] leavers.

The *Solomon Star's* journalists 'need to learn how to find out more sources, get more into journalistic work', according to the Acting Editor. 'They know general things. They need to know the laws, ethics.' She also commented that this should be on-the-job training.

The Editor of the *National Express* also emphasised this:

One of the great needs that I see here is training for the reporters so that they could do in-depth reporting ... that's lacking at the moment because they've never had any journalism training before so there's a need in depth reporting for us in the National Express.

The Media Association of the Solomon Islands (MASI) said university level studies, particularly in the humanities, are urgently needed to ensure professional-quality output.

MASI has received donor funding for some in-country training workshops, but these have been short-term and their delivery has been ad hoc.¹² In 2004 MASI received US\$80,000 (approximately AU\$100,000) from UNESCO for a series of in-country train-the-trainer activities aimed at strengthening local industry capacity to deliver its own training.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

MASI has drafted a code of ethics but this is yet to be adopted by the general membership. One journalist interviewed for the survey had no knowledge of a code of ethics for journalists.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

MASI was established in 1982 and has a voluntary executive. A draft constitution exists and was reviewed in 2003 and it is hoped that this will be adopted later in 2005.

The executive meets regularly to consider matters of concern to all MASI members, whether journalists, producers, engineers or advertising staff. There is no media council or tribunal to oversee journalism standards or hear public complaints about radio, print and television news content. When there is a breach of media ethics, the MASI president issues statements to condemn such breaches (to the media involved) and these are published by all MASI members.

Working conditions are handled by in-house union committees under the Solomon Island National Union of Workers. However, this only applies to those working in the mainstream media. Officers working in NGO and government media units are not members of the union.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

The lack of structured on-the-job training for cadets is an obstacle to improving journalism standards. The UNESCO MASI project will seek to address this by training trainers, and MASI and the industry will need to consider how to ensure that this is sustainable. There is also a lack of professional development for more experienced journalists, especially training to assist them to report more effectively on specialist areas.

The absence of investigative journalism has been noted during the recent ethnic tensions. While it needs to be acknowledged that journalists have had to work in difficult and, at times, threatening environments during this period, comments from the interviewees indicate that there is a need to improve the quality and comprehensiveness of the journalism content being produced by all news media.

The difficulty with rural and outer island coverage (cost of access to these areas, freeing up journalists to travel, training and establishing stringer networks) is a serious issue in a nation where so many people live outside the main city centres. The problem is further compounded by the poor SIBC signal to these areas at certain times of the day. Some consideration needs to be given to how Solomon Island journalists can serve these areas better and on a more regular basis, including

establishing a stringer network, which could include government, NGO and church officers working in the field.

The RAMSI AusAID Media Strengthening Program will provide support in some of the areas mentioned above, including upgrading equipment. It commenced in 2005 and has three strands relating directly to the media, with two advisers working at the SIBC, one with the new General Manager and the other with the news team, and one adviser working with the *Solomon Star*:

- The SIBC General Manager's counterpart will provide support for work on the corporate plan, revenue, staff structure, legislative issues and an outreach program to the provinces to make the station content stronger;
- The SIBC news counterpart will assist in developing investigative reporting, news and current affairs formats, and in strengthening the overall quality of news reporting;
- The adviser working at the *Solomon Star* will assist with strengthening editorial functions, investigative reporting and news gathering.

The advisers will be in place for 12 months. A fourth strand of this project involves strengthening government media communications, which is discussed in the next section.

MASI has been in existence for some years, but it has not been a very effective national media association. The reasons for this need to be examined and strategies implemented to address this. During the survey, MASI said it needed its own secretariat and a full-time media manager to handle its affairs, as the voluntary nature of the executive has restricted the development of the association.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

There is a central Government Communications Unit (GCU) funded from the budget of the Office of the Prime Minister. The Director of the GCU is directly responsible to the Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister also has a Press Secretary.

The GCU is intended to promote the activities of each government department, while the Press Secretary is responsible for promoting and protecting the image of the Prime Minister, his office and the government. The Press Secretary deals with all political issues. During the ethnic tension, the GCU was sidelined and departments tended to go directly to the media. This was still the case during the survey period, August to October 2004, when the GCU could not telephone out and had no fax or email. In late 2004, as part of the RAMSI mission, an Executive Director was appointed to work with the GCU and technical assistance was provided. As a result, the unit has again become operational. This chapter is based on information gathered prior to this, and it is important to detail. The capacity of the former Government Information Division, re-established in 2000 as the GCU as part of an AusAID funded project, has been an issue for well over a decade. The Division suffered from many years of neglect, lack of resources (human and technical) and lack of an effective government strategy to make use of the Division for public communication. Understanding the obstacles facing the GCU during the survey period provides an insight into the challenges facing government media units and illustrates how their capacity can vary depending on government commitment and available resources.¹³

There are nine government ministries and, of these, Health, Police and Justice, Lands and the Office of the Prime Minister produce their own media content.

Human resources

Five people work at the GCU: the Director, a reporter/deputy director, a publications officer and assistant publications officer and an audiovisual officer. The unit's salaries are fully funded from the budget of the Office of the Prime Minister. In November 2004, as noted, an Executive Director was hired (funded by RAMSI) to oversee the strengthening of the GCU.

The Ministry of Health has 28 staff posted throughout the provinces, but only three are responsible for media. One produces radio, one is a graphic artist and the third is responsible for audiovisual productions.

In the Police and Justice Ministry the media is handled by one officer, with one assistant.

One officer in the Ministry of Lands produces a radio program, alongside their other duties.

3.2 Government media processes

The Prime Minister's Press Secretary calls press conferences when necessary, and issues press releases; and the ministries of Health, Lands and Police produce regular radio programs and publish printed materials.

There is a website managed by the Department of Commerce, Employment and Trade and, while it describes government departments and services, it does not carry press releases, speeches and so on, and it is aimed very much at businesses and investors. The website started in 1996 and its purpose is to promote local businesses. It had a news service with news items sourced from the SIBC newsroom. However, when the PFnet came into being that service ended, and it now concentrates on government services and businesspeople wanting to promote their products or services online. The webmaster said that the site is getting more than 1000 hits per month. A government online service is being developed, but government internet use is not extensive. Only the directors of divisions have internet access and this is restricted to two hours a day.

Hansard is available, and there are parliamentary broadcasts on SIBC for about seven hours daily when Parliament is sitting.

3.3 Government department media content

The Ministry of Health produces occasional video programs and a radio program five nights a week on the SIBC, funded by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Ministry of Lands produces a weekly radio program on the SIBC as part of pilot land registration project funded by AusAID.

The Police media unit handles the media work for news related to the police and sends this to the local and international media, when contacted. The unit also produces a weekly radio program, an issues-based radio drama, on the SIBC (Wantok FM) and a monthly newsletter. At the time of the survey there was some doubt about whether the newsletter would continue, due to lack of human resources. Currently the unit does not receive specific funding for media production.

The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) produces a weekly program on the SIBC, which provides information for students and potential students about the college courses. USP does the same for its hundreds of students scattered throughout the country. Neither of these programs contains governance content.

The Ministry of Education produces posters, press releases and centre-spreads for newspapers.

English is used for printed materials and both English and Pijin for radio and video production.

3.4 Media governance priorities

The GCU said the immediate governance concerns were political stability, the restoration of communal trust, reconciliation and economic reconstruction, and promotion of a confident investment climate.

In August–September 2004 a 'Know Your Government' page was published weekly in the *Solomon Star*, paid for by RAMSI. It was produced by the Prime Minister's Press Secretary without the involvement of the GCU. RAMSI is also disseminating information on human rights, corruption, criminal justice and national security issues.

The priority areas for the Ministry of Health are: tobacco use, alcohol, reproductive health, especially teenage pregnancy, STIs, HIV/AIDS and malaria.

The Lands Ministry is focusing on a range of issues to do with land registration, such as customary land, urban land allocation and legal issues.

The Police media unit's priority is to inform the public about the Royal Solomon Islands Police (RSIP), for the purposes of transparency and accountability. 'Its charge is to reshape and rephrase the RSIP after its defacing during and after the ethnic tension so that it can regain a positive public image, interest, trust and confidence.' (Police Media Officer)

The Ministry of Education is developing a multimedia approach to promote education reform, due to start sometime in 2005 with European Union (EU) funding.

3.5 Target audiences

Most of the government departments said their media content targeted general audiences, with some content specifically targeting youth.

The ministries do not have the resources to monitor the impact of their media content. However, a medical researcher did conduct a survey for the Ministry of Health five years ago as part of her studies, but details on the findings of this survey were not available.

3.6 Qualifications and training

For public service appointments a college certificate, diploma or degree is required. For political public relations staff, political experience is a key factor. The Prime Minister's Press Secretary is a political appointment. He is an experienced journalist of 31 years with a Certificate in Journalism from the Manukau Polytech in New Zealand.

The Executive Director of the GCU has a Bachelor of Science from Waikato University in New Zealand, while the GCU's Director, Senior Communications Officer and Senior Publications Officer have journalism degrees (USP, University of Papua New Guinea and Queensland University of Technology respectively).

The webmaster at the Department of Commerce has done a two-month course on website development.

The Ministry of Health radio officer has not received any media training. She is a graduate from the Health Studies School at SICHE. The video production officer is currently in New Zealand receiving training in this area. The Ministry of Health would like to produce more video programs but its video officer is not yet qualified. It has currently contracted a part-time professional freelance officer while the video officer is on study leave.

The officer producing radio programs at the Department of Lands has had no media training.

The Police media officer is a probationary constable with a media and journalism background. He has attended a number of short journalism training activities in his previous positions. The RSIP plans to revamp the police media unit in 2005 to include an inspector, two sergeants and two constables, with a specific budget line for media production.

All these departments bring their scripts to the SIBC studios to be recorded and SIBC staff do the production work.

3.7 Equipment

In 1999 the Government Information Division consisted only of very limited and dated equipment in a crumbling building. It had been run down over the years. With donor assistance (AusAID) the unit was restructured, restaffed, reequipped and renamed in 2000. However, during the ethnic tension, everything was stolen. 'Now we have only one telephone (which can receive but not dial out) and two computers. But if ever we have support to function again, we can do a lot,' said the Director. The unit needs a telephone, fax, email, cameras (still and video) and internet access. The lack of equipment and communications links will be addressed as part of the RAMSI project.

The Prime Minister's Press Secretary has a computer, telephone and fax. He does not have email or internet access.

The Ministry of Commerce has an arrangement with local computer companies to supply and support its computers. Its main concern relates to air-conditioning problems.

The Ministry of Health has no email or internet access. All the graphic work, as well as the visual production work, is done in the audiovisual unit. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) funded the audiovisual equipment at SB\$1.2 million in 1992–93, but as noted, the ministry has not been able to use these facilities effectively because the officers do not have video production qualifications.

According to the Principal Health Education Officer, the equipment in the video unit used to be very good but during the ethnic tension much of it was stolen. All that remains is the mixing console and one video camera (analogue). He would now like to upgrade the equipment to digital.

The Ministry of Lands has no radio production equipment of its own.

The Police Media unit does not have direct telephone access, fax or email. The unit has a contra deal with the SIBC (Wantok FM), which allows it to use the SIBC studios and production staff at no cost in exchange for allowing the FM transmitter to be mounted on the RSIP radio tower. The newsletter is typed and produced on computers in the Police Welfare unit and the printing is outsourced.

3.8

Government–media relationships

As noted, the fourth strand of the RAMSI Media Strengthening project involves reorganising and reestablishing the GCU and improving the effectiveness of overall government–media communications. Funding has been provided for two years for an Executive Director to work with the staff of the GCU and the government on this. The position is based in the Prime Minister’s Office. The role of the Executive Director is to:

- *Support the PM and Cabinet to communicate policy decisions, progress and actions to the people of SI;*
- *Facilitate the provision of timely information relating to Government policies and programs to SI media outlets and through other communication channels;*
- *Liaise with Government Ministries and Departments to identify information needs and mechanisms to disseminate information to public;*
- *Identify opportunities to strengthen Government information services at the provincial level;*
- *Review the structure and operations of the SIG Communications Office to ensure effective and efficient delivery of Information;*
- *Improve staff capacity;*
- *Consider option of outsourcing some activities; and*
- *Liaise with RAMSI Public Affairs Team on joint communications campaigns where appropriate.*

3.9

Observations on government media capacity

Government–media relationships have been ad hoc at best. Successive Solomon Island governments have not implemented a comprehensive whole-of-government communications strategy. While the resources have been available to government – the SIBC and the Government Information Division (now GCU) – government has lacked the capacity and commitment to use these effectively for public information.

Since the coup in 2000, the dissemination of government information has depended on the capacity and willingness of individual departments to produce material and contact the media. Limited government email access further hampers attempts at timely communication.

The reduction of funding to the SIBC – the major communications outlet in the country and the only media capable of reaching a number of rural and outer island communities where the majority of the population lives – is a serious obstacle to government-public information flow.

The following observations are also relevant:

- A Public Information Office is needed to provide material in print and on radio, video and television about the services provided by government departments and agencies and how people can access these. Without this information, people come to the capital looking for answers. Upon arrival they still have to walk the corridors to find someone they know before they get answers. There is very little information available to inform people about how to register land, charities, companies and trusts, or how to apply for probate, obtain social welfare assistance for child welfare and generally how to find the right people in different departments and agencies.
- Government needs to explain the difference in roles and responsibilities between the national and provincial governments and community leadership, and provide information about the role of the public solicitor, the Ombudsman and the Leadership Code Commission.
- Government has a responsibility to ensure human rights (such as the rights of women and children) are protected and promoted. There is little information being provided by government about this.
- Strategic multimedia campaigns for health promotion are needed. Starved of resources for the past five years, staff have made do with minimal materials. They need a fresh injection of professional ideas and resources and this applies to all government departments producing media content. Radio and print production options are available, but radio access in particular, is very expensive, and this needs to be addressed. Video is also expensive, but this could be rationalised. Production costs can be reduced and impact expanded if all government departments pool their video production resources. Perhaps a better option is for productions to be outsourced to private producers. There are now three in the Solomon Islands (TVSI

Productions, SICHE and the Museum) and many others in the region, such as Pasifika Communications, Wan Smolbag Theatre, the SPC and USP.

- A better strategised use of media for proactive health education would benefit from audience surveys so that the demographics are understood and target groups and locations identified. As with most other important information in this country, people need not only specific information but a supporting general information environment that can influence the wider community to keep health concerns in mind and be proactive contributors. A broader audience research project is also required which includes the media and media producing government departments and NGOs, to ascertain audience interests and listening, viewing and reading patterns. This information is now largely anecdotal and needs to be refined given the need for better targeted and delivered public information.

The RAMSI Media Strengthening project has already started to have an impact on the output of the GCU. However, longer term issues such as a sustainable and well coordinated government communications policy still needs to be tackled. How to ensure that there is an on-going government commitment to this, despite future changes in government and the political environment, will be the challenge.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

The umbrella body for registered NGOs is the Development Services Exchange (DSE). In the past up to 100 NGOs have been registered with DSE, but currently there are only 55 active NGOs registered. Of these, seven NGOs are regular media producers.

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

Vois Blong Mere Solomons (VBMS), which focuses on women's rights and issues, produces a radio program twice-weekly on the SIBC and Paoa FM in Pijin, and a quarterly newsletter, *Nius Blong Mere*, in English. The newsletter provides in-depth information about the topics discussed in the radio programs and 200 copies are printed.

The Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres (SIARTC) produces three radio programs weekly on the SIBC for Rural Training Centres (RTCs) throughout the country. The programs are produced in Pijin. SIARTC is working in partnership with a project funded by the EU. The main areas of work include RTC instructors and principals, promotion of enterprise development at RTCs, short courses, construction and initial running of Vanga Teachers College and media promotion. Education and skills training for young people is the main focus of this work.

The Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association (SIPPA) produces a radio program twice-weekly on the SIBC in Pijin and produced programs on ZFM 100 until June 2004, when funding from Family Planning Australia ceased. It has also produced advertising spots and occasional press releases. SIPPA's focus is reproductive health, such as STIs, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and family planning services, including condom use and pap smears for women.

Catholic Communications has weekly radio programs on the SIBC in Pijin and is starting its own community radio station. It also produces a quarterly newsletter, *Voice Katolica*, which is distributed in the Solomon Islands and overseas. The newsletter generally includes 15 stories in English and 1500 copies of each issue are printed, 200 of which go to overseas subscribers, including their funder, the World Association of Catholic Communication (SIGNIS).

Catholic Communications produces three weekly radio programs. Youth Quest targets youth and features youth views on such issues as reproductive health, STIs, HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, self-esteem, obeying parents and the values of discipline in creating better citizens. The Church believes that this assists with the country's rebuilding process after the ethnic tension.

The second program is called Community Support and features interviews with community leaders about positive ideas, such as a successful fishing project that could inspire other communities to aim for success.

The third program, Stories for Our Soul, uses excerpts from a BBC drama series on the difficulties experienced by people who have stopped going to church (when they suddenly realise there is a problem and turn back to God they become better people). 'It's basically an inspirational program that we use to help people who may find themselves in such situations and we believe

there are thousands out there, especially after the ethnic tension,' explained the Director. Catholic Communications also produces a weekly church news bulletin for radio, as do the other main churches in the country. With the exception of Stories for Our Soul, which contains content in English, the radio programs are in Pijin.

Save the Children Australia produces press releases and information on children's rights and youth advocacy. In the past it has produced radio programs on children's rights on the SIBC.

The Family Support Centre (FSC) produces videotapes, radio programs and newsletters on a range of issues, such as human rights, violence and gender, HIV and teenage pregnancy. 'Unfortunately because of lack of funds, we cannot highlight these issues on the media as we ought to,' said the Coordinator.

In 2001 the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) theatre group, Sei Action, ran a radio series on governance issues relating to the election. This was funded by the New Zealand Overseas Development Agency (NZODA, now NZAID). The program finished when funding ceased. New funding support from the Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP) has allowed SIDT to resume publication of its quarterly magazine, *Link*, after a two-year hiatus due to lack of funding. *Link* consists of 16 to 20 pages in Pijin, and there are 3000 copies per issue. SIDT also used to produce a women's magazine called *Mere Save* (Women Know) discussing women's issues, but that stopped when the ethnic tension started. Currently, it produces one page on women's issues in *Link*.

Governance issues covered by SIDT include the environment, unemployment, the inadequacy of the school system, economic issues, problems related to money schemes, law and order, civics, health, sanitation, malaria, the development of a variety of food sources and vitamin use.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

VBMS's radio programs on the SIBC are aimed at women in the provinces, while its programs on Paoa FM are for young people, mainly girls and mothers in Honiara.

SIARTC's target audiences are RTC staff and students.

SIPPA described its target audience as general, as did FSC. 'It's basically going out to those who are married, men and women, and those still to get married too, to be aware of the issues,' said the Manager, Information, Education and Communication.

Catholic Communications radio programs target rural listeners, mostly young people, community leaders and families. *Voice Katolica* is aimed at those in rural areas around the country and international readers who have worked in the Solomon Islands, such as missionaries interested in keeping up with developments in the Solomon Islands.

SIDT targets the rural population. *Link* magazine supports its Village Demonstration Workers (VDWs), who are based in 13 centres throughout the Solomon Islands. There used to be 200 VDWs but only two-thirds are currently active.¹⁴ SIDT sends copies of *Link* to the VDWs for distribution to people who can read or for the VDWs to use to explain the issues to people in the communities. The VDWs also organise short meetings to discuss the issues raised in the magazine. SIDT writes *Link* in simple English, to assist people who cannot read or write. (Manager, Information and Advocacy)

Another group SIDT targets is students, because they often do research on issues such as unemployment, logging and environment, and approach SIDT for assistance.

None of the NGOs has done formal audience surveys, but they report receiving feedback via the phone and during their fieldwork.

4.4 NGO media capacity

VBMS has one Program Officer who handles media production alongside other duties.

SIARTC has one Training Coordinator/Radio Producer who spends about two hours a week on media production. The officer arranges interviews, conducts interviews, writes scripts and identifies inserts. The SIBC staff do the production work.

SIPPA has one officer, the Manager, Information, Education and Communication, who spends about five hours of each working week on press releases, radio scripting and production, and production duties. Media production is only part of his duties.

Catholic Communications has five officers involved in media production: one is writer, editor and photographer of *Voice Katolica*; one produces the radio programs, with two officers who act as assistants as required; and one officer collects news from the provinces through the Catholic two-way radio network.

Save the Children does not have a media officer. Officers from different sections write the press releases, depending on the topic.

The FSC is hoping to secure funding for a full-time media officer. Currently the one Program Officer works on media production, but this is not his primary responsibility. He spends about two hours a week on newsletter production. Video production is outsourced.

SIDT has two officers, the Manager, Information and Advocacy, and a journalist, who spend a proportion of their working week on media production.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

The VBMS program officer responsible for radio and print production has undertaken training in print media at a community college in Fiji but has had no formal radio training. She has learned this on the job. The director of VBMS used to work at the SIBC, and sometimes she provides assistance when the officer is unavailable.

The SIARTC said that officers working in media production needed basic knowledge in scripting, interviewing and presentation. However, the current officer (a former secondary teacher) 'started off without any of these so I picked up ideas and tips from SIBC staff as I continued to host the series'. The SIARTC officer attended two short courses, conducted by SIBC in the late 1990s for user departments, on the basics of planning a program, designing structure, scripting, presentation, interviewing, editing and identifying usable sections from interviews.

SIPPA has a very experienced officer who worked as a station manager of a regional SIBC station, and had access to training programs prior to taking up this position.

Catholic Communications said its officers require basic radio production skills and basic news-writing skills and knowledge about the Church. The officer in charge of radio production at Catholic Communications has done a range of short training programs in radio production, radio writing and video production. Another officer is a former SIBC producer/presenter and a third officer (a retired teacher) has attended two short radio production courses.

One of the officers at Save the Children has completed part of a journalism course (USP) and has experience working at the SIBC.

The FSC officer has no tertiary qualifications, but he has experience producing radio and print content for another NGO. He has also attended a short radio production workshop conducted by the SPC in Suva, and regional training in dealing with family issues, including media work at the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre.

SIDT said its officers need to understand the role of the media in relation to NGOs and how NGOs can use the media. They also require basic journalism skills, must be computer literate, know how to do layout for newspapers, and have skills in radio production. They must know how to budget, plan three-year programs, compile reports for donors, and know what criteria donors require from NGOs, as most NGOs depend on donor funding. They also need to be able to do financial and narrative reporting. The two officers currently working with the media have extensive media experience and both have undertaken some tertiary studies (not completed), in addition to short courses and four years of on-the-job training with Voluntary Service Overseas volunteers (VSOs)

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

Further training needs listed by the NGOs were:

VBMS said its officers need qualifications in photography and graphics to improve the newsletter, and in how to write good radio scripts and collect news.

Catholic Communications said it required training in working with the latest technology, especially technology that helps to enhance media work, such as digital editing and burning CDs:¹⁵

The problem is that we do not know how to use them. For instance, there's this computer that we should use to produce programs but I still don't know how to use that. We also have a CD burner but I also don't know how to use that. We are using two mini-disk recorders and it's just a few months ago that we knew how to record on them. We also have a digital audio

tape, DAT recorder. We're using this now. So technology-wise, we are quite up to date. It's us the operators who need to update ourselves. (Director)

The SIDT officer listed social community work, how to work with a community, human resource management skills and IT skills in order to keep up with technology and to master using digital equipment.

The SIARTC officer said he had no immediate need for further training and Save the Children did not list any training priorities. SIPPA also said its current officer did not require any further training as he has considerable media experience. FSC will identify its training needs once it has employed a full-time media officer.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

VBMS has telephones, computers and internet access, and mini-disk recorders. Only the Director has email access.

SIARTC has a telephone, computer, fax, email and website, and it describes this as adequate.

As mentioned earlier, Catholic Communications has its own studio facilities with digital editing and recording equipment, and uses these to produce its SIBC programs. It is the only NGO that has the capacity to do this.

Save the Children has telephone, fax and internet access, which are primarily used for its non-media work.

The FSC has a computer with XP, Publisher 2002, and PageMaker for typing, editing and creating layouts. Photoshop will soon be installed. This was described as adequate for its media production work.

SIDT has a telephone, fax and internet access, computers and a Fuji digital camera. It said the camera needed updating, and a scanner and a printer is needed.

Email costs SB\$0.74 a minute and NGOs do not get the special rate that educational institutions do. Most NGOs limit access to email as a result of this.

4.8 NGO media processes

Media access in the Solomon Islands (public and commercial media) is expensive and nothing is free. SIARTC pays SB\$60,000 per annum to the SIBC for three, 15-minute weekly programs.

VBMS is paying SB\$76,000 per annum or SB\$2375 per month for its programs on the SIBC and Paoa FM.

In 2004 SIPPA paid SB\$60,000 for media production and broadcast time to:

SIBC, SB\$24,000 (15-minute weekly series);

ZFM 100, SB\$22,000 (15-minute weekly series);

Radio Hapi Lagun (SIBC) in Gizo, Western Province, SB\$12,000 (15-minute weekly series);

Television, SB\$2000 (advertising for one week during the Olympic coverage, relayed locally).

Catholic Communications receives a 50 per cent discount on the normal SIBC charges. This is because it produces its own programs and pays for broadcast time only. It pays SB\$2160 a week for 12 weeks for three programs.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

Catholic Communications is establishing a community radio at Tetere in the Guadalcanal Plains because it wants 'people to express their views about health, education and other important issues, not merely Catholic' and to use the 'power of the media to enrich people'. After a three-year wait, Catholic Communications was allocated a frequency (89.9 FM) early in 2004. It still requires funds to set up the station and is in contact with possible donors. The station will be small, broadcasting for four hours a day initially, with coverage of Tetere only. Two workshops have been held for interested youth and they are reported to be enthusiastic about being involved as volunteers. The station will be 'staffed' by one full-time volunteer.¹⁶

In the past SIDT has considered establishing its own community radio station, but at the time of the survey this was not a priority.

4.10 Funding to produce media content

VBMS receives funds for its media content from Bread for the World (BFTW), a German funding organisation. Prior to this, AusAID provided some support to VBMS.

The EU is SIARTC's donor for all the media content. The EU has been assisting SIARTC since 1993. A first-phase project ended in 1996. For an evaluation see <http://europa.eu.int>. A second three-year phase began in September 2000 to strengthen the administrative capacity at RTCs, as well as offering a comprehensive training package to upgrade RTC instructors. The EU also offers grants to help upgrade infrastructure at RTCs and to help start small income-generating projects.

SIPPA's media content has been funded by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (SIBC radio programs) and Family Planning Australia provided six months funding for a youth program on ZFM until June 2004.

SIGNIS provided Catholic Communications with funding for equipment (computers and two mini-disk recorders).

Save the Children Australia's main funding body is AusAID, although it does not receive funding specifically for media content.

FSC has received AusAID and Oxfam funding support to produce videotapes, conduct workshops and enable its theatre group to raise awareness in various suburbs of Honiara.

SIDT is receiving funding from the AFAP to produce and publish its magazine, *Link*.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

The following recommendations were made by the NGOs:

- 'Networking between NGOs needs to be good ... say our links with Family Support Centre, Literacy Association of Solomon Islands, Adolescent Reproductive Health Project and the others. Such networking is necessary so that we in VBMS could get news for our radio programmes and newsletter.' (VBMS)
- 'When there is something new coming up, we invite the media. They turn up but when the mainstream media organises press conferences, they don't invite us. It would be good to invite us as well so that we can cover the issues.' (SIDT)
- 'I think the media association should hold meetings and emphasise the importance of working together. Especially the mainstream media with us in the NGOs.' (SIDT)
- Regular meetings and discussions between NGOs and the media (once a month) to strengthen the interaction between the two sectors. There was a stakeholder group that used to meet monthly to discuss the work of each member in advocating women's and children's issues. Most Honiara-based NGOs had representatives in it, as well as the media and the police. The idea was started by a former Director of Save the Children Australia (2001–02). The monthly meeting functioned as a regular briefing for the media on NGO activities and this information was then covered in the news. The meetings finished when the Save the Children Director's term expired.
- 'I found this out also on Bellona last year. People don't know what news is ... you know, one old man said whenever they see a photographer taking a picture, the immediate thing they think of is the picture of whoever's being taken ending up in a rubbish tip! So, this makes me feel that we in the media must do a lot of awareness about our work. You know, come up with a strategy to educate the people about media. That's something for MASI, I think. But I feel that that is very important. Again, however, despite that somewhat negative thinking of that old man I'd mentioned about, some people on Bellona are sending stories in too for the magazine which is great.' (SIDT)¹⁷
- NGOs and community groups such as the civil society network also require training in how to conduct simple surveys for feedback, opinions and for baseline data. These surveys do not need to be costly. Good, simple and very informative surveys can be conducted by small organisations using volunteers and school children. The important issue is the design of the research instrument and its consistency of application.

¹ Source: www.dfat.gov.au. Solomon Islands Country Information

² Sources: www.dfat.gov.au, www.lonelyplanet.com

³ All currency in this chapter, unless stated, is in Solomon Islands dollars. SB\$1.00 equals approximately AU\$0.17.

⁴ The TV Board was reconstituted in January 2005, which was outside the survey period.

⁵ Pacific Partners is a non-profit, non-denominational Christian radio organisation based in Auckland, New Zealand, that has assisted a number of Pacific Island countries, including Tonga, Vanuatu, Fiji and PNG, to establish Christian broadcasting stations.

⁶ Windup radios, similar to those used in East Timor, could be worth considering, but there appears to have been little discussion about the potential of these radios for Pacific Island countries.

⁷ The *National Express* used to have two journalists, but one left during the research period.

⁸ Lack of logging equipment is also an issue for some other PSB stations in small to medium sized countries.

⁹ General Manager, SIBC, 'Opportunities Afforded to Diversity – The Case of Solomon Islands', paper presented to the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Conference, 2004.

¹⁰ Information provided by SANA researcher, a senior producer/broadcaster at the SIBC.

¹¹ See <http://www.ifex.org/fr/content/view/full/15814/> See also 'Island nations' media fight off attacks' by Edmond Toka, Asia Times Online, 3 April 2005 on government attempts to restrict media reporting on civil disruption.

¹² The one-off nature of much donor funding for short-term training is an issue across the Pacific.

¹³ During the survey period, the Cook Islands Government appeared to downgrade its government media unit, when it said that finding a new Director was not a priority, and stopped updating the government website.

¹⁴ VDWs are volunteers trained by SIDT to work with village communities.

¹⁵ The need to learn how to use digital equipment was raised by a number of government departments and NGOs in different countries.

¹⁶ The station commenced broadcasting in March 2005.

¹⁷ The need for public education in media awareness and literacy was raised by different sectors in a number of countries.

TONGA

BACKGROUND

Tonga consists of 171 islands, and it is estimated that fewer than 40 are inhabited. The major inhabited islands are Tognatapu, Vava'u, Ha'apai, 'Eua, Niuafu'oi and Niu Atoputapu. The estimated population is 108,141, of which almost two-thirds live on the main island, Tongatapu. The major languages are Tongan and English.

Tonga has the unique status in the Pacific of being a constitutional monarchy. The ruling family of Tonga, the last remaining Polynesian kingdom, can be traced back more than 1000 years. King Taufa'ahau Tupou I, the first chief to rule over all of Tonga, and the founder of the present dynasty, took power in 1831. Prior to this, in 1822, he converted to Christianity with the arrival of the Wesleyan Missionary Society and Christianity began to spread throughout the islands.

At the time of his conversion, Taufa'ahau took the name of Siaosi (George) and his consort assumed the name Salote (Charlotte) in honour of King George III and Queen Charlotte of England. In the following years, he united all of the Tongan islands for the first time in recorded history. He established a constitution and a parliamentary government based, in some respects, on the British model. In 1862 he abolished the existing system of semi-serfdom and established a new system of land tenure. Under this system every male Tongan, upon reaching the age of 16, was entitled to rent for life, at a nominal fee, a plot of bushland (*api*) of 8.25 acres (3.3 hectares), plus a village allotment of about three-eighths of an acre for his home.¹

The Constitution was introduced in 1875 (revised in 1970) and a Treaty of Friendship was signed with the British in 1879, which afforded Tonga the unique status of a Protected State (as distinct from a Protectorate, which allowed for less autonomy in government). However, the British subsequently decided that the kingdom was better off as a Protectorate, which it became in 1900. Between 1918 and 1965, Tonga was ruled by Queen Salote Tupou III. Upon her death, she was succeeded by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, who has ruled ever since. The islands assumed complete responsibility for internal affairs, before being granted full independence in 1970.

Under its Constitution of 1875, the government consists of the King in Privy Council and Cabinet, the Legislative Assembly and the Judiciary. The Privy Council assists the King in the discharge of his constitutional functions and is the highest executive authority. It comprises the members of Cabinet and any others the King chooses to appoint. The Cabinet consists of the Prime Minister, ministers and the governors of Tonga's island groups of Ha'apai and Vava'u. The Cabinet is responsible for carrying out the decisions of the Privy Council. In January 2000 the King appointed his youngest son, HRH Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, as Prime Minister.

The single chamber *Fale Alea* (Legislative Assembly) is controlled by the royal family and noble families. It consists of nine nobles who are elected by the 33 hereditary nobles of Tonga and nine people's representatives elected by universal adult suffrage for three-year terms. The legislature also includes 12 Cabinet ministers, appointed by the monarch.

Over the last decade the Human Rights and Democracy Movement, formed in 1992, has applied consistent pressure on the King to democratise. Constitutional changes were put into effect in 2003, giving greater powers to the monarch and imposing strict limits on political opposition.²

Tonga has a small open economy with a narrow export base and relies heavily on private remittances from Tongan communities overseas and external development assistance. Tonga has a reasonable basic infrastructure with well-developed education services, but other social services work less well, including health. National development objectives focus on liberalising the economy

with the objective of boosting economic growth through the private sector. However, its GDP growth rates have been declining.³

The survey in Tonga was conducted from August to October 2004.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Department of Communication was established late in 2003 in support of national development policy objectives, when the *Media Operators Act 2003* and the *Newspaper Act 2003* were passed. The department is responsible for media and telecommunications policy, legislation, regulation and licensing. The Prime Minister is the Minister for Communications and the Government Information Unit is located in the Prime Minister's office.

The Tonga Communications Corporation (TCC) was established in 2001 as a public enterprise to implement government policy and legislation on telecommunications. The TCC is governed by a Board of Directors chaired by the Prime Minister.

The list of relevant legislation is:

- *Tonga Broadcasting Commission Act 1989*
- *Communications Act 2000*
- *Radio Communication (Amendment) Act 2000*
- *Telegraph (Amendment) Act 2000*
- *Tonga Communications Corporation Act 2000*
- *Newspaper Act 2003*
- *Media Operators Act 2003*
- *An Act to Amend the Act of Constitution of Tonga, No. 17, 2003*
- *Protection from Abuse of Press Freedom Ordinance 2003*

Community radio or non-profitable AM radio stations come under the *Communication Act 2000*. However, there is no distinction between licence fees for community and commercial stations. Licence fees are TOP1000 (approximately AU\$660)⁴ for commercial FM and profitable AM stations.⁵ The fees for the television stations were not available. The Tongan Broadcasting Commission (TBC) is exempt from these fees as it is a government organisation.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

The Tongan Constitution contains guarantees for freedom of speech and freedom of the press:

Freedom of the press

7. *It shall be lawful for all people to speak write and print their opinions and no law shall ever be enacted to restrict this liberty. There shall be freedom of speech and of the press for ever but nothing in this clause shall be held to outweigh the law of slander or the laws for the protection of the King and the Royal Family.*

However, in 2003 the Constitution was amended to add two subclauses to Clause 7:

- (2) *It shall be lawful, in addition to the exceptions set out in sub-clause (1), to enact such laws as are considered necessary in national security, public order, morality, privileges of the Legislative Assembly and to provide for contempt of Court.*
- (3) *It shall be lawful to enact laws to regulate the operation of any media.*

This amendment enabled the government to restrict freedom of speech and freedom of the press. It introduced the *Newspaper Act and the Media Operators Act* in October 2003, which gave government the powers to licence newspapers for the first time and to issue licences for the importation and sale of foreign newspapers.⁶

1.3 Media regulation

As noted, media operator and newspaper licensing was introduced in late 2003. When laws were passed the newspaper organisations were asked to fill in an application form requesting a

licence for 2004. Publishers or editors were required to have a formal qualification in journalism and a commitment to 'honesty, fairness, independence and respect for the rights of others'.⁷ On 6 February 2004 the Department of Communication called all media organisations to a press conference to announce the first newspaper licences: *Taumu'a Lelei* Catholic Newspaper, *Tonga Chronicle*, *Ofa-ki-Tonga* (Tokaikolo Church, a breakaway from the Wesleyan Church), *Tohi Fanongonongo* (Wesleyan Church), *Lali Buzz* (private) and *Tonga Star* (private).

Other applicants, such as Vula News Co Ltd (*Talaki*), *Taimi 'o Tonga*, *Matangi Tonga* magazine, the Friendly Islands Bookshop (Wesleyan Church) and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon Church), were not granted licences at the time. The reasons varied. The Department of Communication told the media that the applications from these newspapers or bookshops were either late and they needed time to screen them or some applications did not comply with the new laws. The amount of local media ownership was an issue for *Matangi Tonga* and the *Taimi 'o Tonga*. According to the law, foreign ownership should not exceed 20 per cent. The *Kele'a* newspaper was initially refused a licence because the publisher was not qualified, that is, he had no formal journalism qualification. The publisher then engaged as Editor a former General Manager of the TBC, who has a formal qualification, and reapplied. This application was successful and the licence was awarded in April 2004.

On 16 February 2004 the Department of Communication issued three more newspaper licences: Friendly Islands Bookshop, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Vula News Co Ltd. The Department alleged that the *Taimi 'o Tonga* did not resubmit its application form but the Editor told media organisations that he had submitted the form. Meanwhile *Matangi Tonga* went online. Another two newspaper licences were issued to the *Taimi 'o Vava'u* (tabloid) and *Tala-kei-Kapa* (news bulletin).

In April 2004 the Chief Secretary and Secretary to Cabinet said the legislation was required to address journalism ethics, rights and responsibilities because:

*Some of the media have unscrupulously abused this important code of ethics, and severely damaged the public's right to honest and fair journalism for two decades, and [as a result of] the failure of all efforts including those by the media to solve this dilemma that Government has finally decided to take the necessary actions.*⁸

However, on 8 October 2004 Chief Justice R. M. Weber found that the *Media Operators and Newspaper Acts* were:

*Inconsistent with Clause 7 of the Constitution because it would prevent certain people from exercising freedom of the Press, and thus would prevent the public from having access to information and comment freely ... In general, the Act cannot stand because it is too widely expressed, too unclear as to its limitations, and too intimidating, because a person cannot be sure whether or not what he writes may result in prosecution or even imprisonment.*⁹

Justice Weber declared both Acts void.

As a result of this decision, newspaper organisations are now only required to have a trading licence to operate, and have to apply for this annually. In October 2004 the government approved a trading licence for the *Taimi 'o Tonga* so the newspaper could again be sold in Tonga.

The *Communication Act 2000* gives the Department of Communication a range of regulatory powers. Section 72 allows the Department to restrict or prohibit 'unsuitable content or particular types of content' including advertising, and to regulate 'the representation of Tongan culture and national identity'. The Minister is able to specify content standards as part of the licence conditions, and these may be altered by the Department, with the approval of the Minister.

The Department of Communication has distributed draft copies of a Television and Radio Advertising Content Code, and a Radio Programme Content Code and Television Programme Content Code for industry feedback. The draft codes will then be circulated to get public feedback:

These drafts were distributed to the media concerned in March 2004 and gave them a month to reply and no one has returned this request. I presume it's okay but I had to call them and find out. There were some concerns that there seem a bit strict because this is basically to free television but we were thinking of having parental control over what programs the children do watch at home. Parents should be educated in the use of television in the home. (Senior Communication Counsel)

The content codes are based on Singaporean laws and adapted to Tongan needs. The Senior Communication Counsel for the Department of Communication confirmed this: 'This is basically

what it is and we adopted the codes with a few amendments.’ He added that the Department hopes the codes will be self-regulatory. However, section 71 (1) of the *Communication Act* does allow the Minister to direct the Department ‘to determine standards for content application services ... which may apply to all licences’. While section 74 gives the Department, with the Minister’s approval, the power to direct a licensee or class of licensees ‘to comply with an approved content standard’.

In 2002 the Commissioner for Public Relations (CPR) office was established in the Ministry of Justice. The CPR is an independent person appointed by His Majesty in Privy Council, and his role is to investigate people’s concerns and complaints about administrative actions or decisions by government departments or organisations. This office also deals with public complaints about media content.

At the time of the survey, the CPR had five complaints about language and topics featured in popular music on commercial FM radio stations. The content was deemed not to be of community value:

We look at the letter of complaints, then tap onto these radio stations and gave them reasons as required by the Law. If there is an editorial performance that is not up to scratch, or not fair and we think it’s not balanced, the licence cannot be granted. There is also a policy in communication for televisions/radios [referring to Communication Act 2000]. (Senior Communication Counsel)

Tongan censorship laws (Chapter 54: 19 October 1960) relate to the importation of certain publications; unlawful acts concerning prohibition publications; powers of search and arrest; and provisions for exceptions.

1.4 Defamation

The *Defamation Act 1923* (amended 1926 and 1988) states that:

Defamation of character consists in speaking or in writing, printing or otherwise putting into visible form any matter damaging the reputation of another or exposing another to hatred, contempt or ridicule or causing him to be shunned. Secondly, the repetition by any person of defamatory matter concerning another also constitutes defamation of character. The penalty for defamation of sovereign — every person who shall defame the character of the King or any member of the Royal Family shall on conviction thereof be liable to a fine not exceeding TOP400 and in default of payment to imprisonment for any term not exceeding two years.

In 1993, following an amendment to the Act, TOP400 was deleted and replaced with TOP2000. The penalty for defaming other people (not the Royal Family) was increased from TOP100 to TOP1000, with default of payment resulting in up to one year’s imprisonment.

In criminal proceedings, truth of the matter is not a sufficient defence; the defendant must also prove that the publication was ‘for the public benefit’ (section 7).

Section 10.2 of the proposed Television Content Code, while not specifically referring to defamation, is also relevant as it contains the following provision:

A right of reply or an opportunity to respond shall be granted to the Government or its agencies, to correct mistakes, wrongful reporting or misrepresentations. For private individuals and groups, an opportunity to respond should be considered on the merits of each case. DOC may direct a broadcaster to give an aggrieved party the opportunity to respond over an appropriate medium.

In addition to this, the *Protection from Abuse of Press Freedom Ordinance 2003* section 6 (2) states that Cabinet determines whether action is required against a publication (printed, electronic or imported), ‘for the protection of the King, the Royal Family, the Government or the people of this Kingdom’. Any person who commits an offence under this Ordinance is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding TOP1000 or up to two years imprisonment.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are no local content quotas for television or radio. However, as noted above, the Department of Communication has distributed content codes for advertising and programs on radio and television and it has the power to include content requirements and standards as part of licence conditions. Areas covered in the codes are: Tongan culture and national identity, securing the

national interest, racial and religious harmony, family reunion policy, children's programs, public morals, social values, sex and nudity, violence and crimes, and gambling:

This is just a number of examples for the protection of the young in the country. It's a major issue to define what is acceptable. We can only suggest what is acceptable; we rely on the broadcasters and the newspapers/televisions to uphold what I have listed above. (Senior Communication Counsel)

1.6 Public service broadcasting

There are two government media, the TBC and a weekly newspaper, the *Tonga Chronicle*. The TBC was established in 1975 as a government owned statutory body. Prior to this, it was a government department. The Board is appointed by Government, and it appoints the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and then submits the recommendation to Cabinet. The Editor of the *Tonga Chronicle* is appointed by the Prime Minister's office. The Editor is also responsible to the Prime Minister's office, while the TBC CEO is responsible to the TBC Board.

The *Tongan Broadcasting Commission Act* section 14 states that:

The Prime Minister may by notice in writing require the Commission to include in any programme broadcast of the Commission such items of general interest or utility as the Prime Minister may from time to time determine:

Provided that the requirements of the Prime Minister under this section shall not be such as to entail the broadcasting of matter for a period in excess of 30 minutes in any period of 12 consecutive hours.

Section 15 contains a further constraint. It states that Cabinet can notify 'the principal office of the Commission' in writing to prohibit 'broadcasting any matter or matter of any class or character specified in the notice'.

1.7 Government funding for media

Although the TBC is owned by government, the government does not provide the TBC with annual funding. The TBC's operational funds come from program sales (production and broadcast time), advertisements, the radio shop (equipment repairs) and donor funds. The TBC is responsible for raising all its own funds, and has a marketing department to focus on this. When the TBC started Television Tonga in 2001 the CEO did request government funding for equipment and the TBC has since received a total of TOP1m for this (2003–04).

The *Tonga Chronicle* receives TOP400,000 per year from the government (the Prime Minister's office). Over half of this goes to printing costs and the rest is for staff salaries, facilities and other expenses. In 2003 government funds accounted for 80 per cent of the *Chronicle's* budget and it had to raise the other 20 per cent. It raised more than TOP200,000 through sales and advertisements:

But this budget we received this year [2004] is not enough, we need new equipment for news production urgently. So for 2004, I did request for an increase but because of the reform program that is conducted by the Minister of Finance all government departments are asked to cut down their expenditures. (Editor)

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

Radio

- The TBC, the national public service broadcaster, operates Radio Tonga, commercial FM radio station 90 FM, and Television Tonga, and is based in Nuku'alofa and owned by the Government of Tonga. It is the main source of local broadcast news.
- FM 88.6 is privately owned by a family business, and airs music and local advertisements in Tongan and English. Sunday airtime is dedicated to religious music. The operators of FM 88.6 in Nuku'alofa also run a separately programmed FM 88.6 in Vava'u.
- FM 89.1 is privately owned by Semi Ve'a. It airs popular music and local advertisements in Tongan and English.

- FM 93.1 is a privately owned station that airs religious content, and is operated by the United Christian Broadcasters (UCB) Pacific Partners.
- FM 1 is a privately owned station only heard in Vava'u.

Newspapers

- *Tonga Chronicle* is a government-owned weekly English-language newspaper with 1000 copies per edition. The Tongan-language edition is *Kalonikali Tonga*. The *Chronicle* does not have its own independent website, but articles can be accessed from the Government of Tonga website (Prime Minister's Department), and it has a page hosted by *Tonga on the Net* at: <http://www.tongatapu.net.to/tonga/news/media/chronicle.html>
- *Taumu'a Lelei*, a Catholic bilingual newspaper produced every three weeks (used to be monthly), is owned by the Catholic Diocese of Tonga. Bishop Soane Lilo Foliaki SM is the publisher and editor. *Taumu'a Lelei* does not have a website.
- *Taimi 'o Tonga* is a fortnightly newspaper based in Auckland, New Zealand, with journalists in Tonga. It is owned by Kalafi Moala (publisher). This paper is produced in Tongan and it also publishes its news-in-brief online. During the survey period the newspaper was not distributed in Tonga because the Government had not granted it a licence. As noted, this changed in October 2004, when the Media Operator's Act 2003 and the Newspaper Licensing Act 2003 were declared void and invalid by the Tongan Supreme Court.
- *Kele'a* is a bilingual weekly tabloid owned by Po'oi Pohiva (publisher), which commenced in April 2004. It prints 4000 copies each issue. The *Kele'a* does not have a website.
- *Taimi 'o Vava'u* is a monthly newspaper owned by 'Etuete Lavulavu (publisher and editor), Member of Parliament for Vava'u.
- *Tonga Star* is a privately owned monthly bilingual newspaper. Its owner, publisher and editor is Sangster Saulala.
- *Tohi Fanongonongo* is a monthly broadsheet newspaper produced by the Wesleyan Church. The paper's publisher and editor is President Alifeleti Mone.
- *Ofa ki Tonga* is a monthly tabloid that is produced by the Tokaikolo Church, which is a breakaway of the Wesleyan Church. Its publisher and editor is President Rev. Saulala.
- *Tala-kei-Kapa* is a monthly news bulletin that is privately owned by the Kotoa Movement. The editor is Salesi Kuvaka.
- *Talaki* is a weekly tabloid privately own by the 'Akau'ola family. The editor is Fr Seluini 'Akau'ola, and the publisher and manager is Filokalafi 'Akau'ola. The newspaper commenced in 2004.

Online news services

- *Matangi Tonga* is the online news service owned by Vava'u Press. Prior to this it was a highly regarded independent quarterly news magazine, which had been published since 1986. As noted earlier, the Government's 2003 media laws required that media companies have no more than 20 percent foreign ownership, and Vava'u Press did not meet this requirement.¹¹ In response to this, Vava'u Press established an online news service <http://www.matangitonga.to> which publishes in English. It plans to re-introduce the news magazine in hard copy at a future date. Vava'u Press also publishes tourist, youth and cultural publications and books.

Television

In addition to the TBC's national station, Television Tonga, there is:

- Tonfon Pay TV, a pay cable television based in Nuku'alofa and run by Shoreline, a company owned by HRH Prince Tupouto'a. Tonfon broadcasts five overseas channels: children's movies, old movies and modern movies, documentaries and world news. There is no local news.
- Trinity TV, a satellite television service operated by the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) broadcasting American Christian programs. It does not produce local news.
- Oceania Broadcasting Network (OBN) Television, which is privately owned and managed by Sangster Saulala. It used to broadcast TBN programs but no longer does this, as TBN now runs its own 24-hour television service via satellite. OBN's programming has a Christian focus. OBN Television does not produce local news but does have some panel discussion programs.

Media outlets surveyed

The survey included interviews with media organisations producing local news on governance issues that are based in Tonga. Due to the large number of newspapers in Tonga, weekly and fortnightly newspapers were included, with the exception of the *Talaki*, which had only recently commenced publication.

2.2 Radio and television program format

Radio Tonga's morning format contains music, news and information, and education programs broadcast to primary schools and some government-produced programs. This is followed by talkback programs in the afternoon, news, and sponsored programs produced by government ministries and music at night.

90FM targets youth with music and news.

Television Tonga transmits from 4 pm to 12 midnight, commencing with children's programs, followed by programs targeting teenagers, government department and NGO-produced programs from 6.30 to 8.00 pm, then BBC news and local news, and documentaries, movies, church services, national events and sport.

The TBC said that it is aiming to give audiences a good balance of programs on radio and television.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The Editor of the *Tonga Chronicle* said that the paper aims to be fair, balanced and factual and to provide different viewpoints ('something from the other side') compared to the other newspapers. It tries to balance its stories, 'some on human interest, not only on political and economical, but to have something for the people'. It also covers health and education issues, and has a page for children to entertain them with puzzles.

The *Chronicle* is also focusing on Tongan language use, and consults with school principals, who use the newspaper for their Tongan language classes.

Taumu'a Lelei focuses on current national issues such as economics, press/media regulation, Sunday laws, health, HIV/AIDS, education, and church news from different parishes and the Diocese of Tonga and Niue. The paper has contributors in some outer islands. It is bilingual, with about 55–60 per cent in the vernacular:

The reason is that we want our people to read and understand what is going on and what issues of concern there are in the country. It is basically giving our people the right to information, so they can make informed decisions, and the best way to disseminate the news would be in the language of the people. (Assistant Editor)

The focus of the *Taimi 'o Tonga* is news that affects Tongan communities in Tonga and the lives of the Tongan community around the world. The Editor said local news is what matters most in the newspaper as it is 'what makes the paper sell'. 'What's happening in court, what's happening in Parliament, what's happening in the government? That is the thing that people want to read here, and certainly too the people overseas.' (Editor)

According to the Editor, *Kele'a* focuses on good professionally written stories that are of national interest. The main aim at the moment is to develop the paper to be a reliable and timely source of information:

You know, according to our licence, we have to uphold traditions, and cultures and things like that. Now, the paper as I am experimenting with that, we are trying to cover social, political and economic areas. We also have, to be more specific, we have cultural traditions section, we have a religious, more like a spiritual, thing there. We have sports, we have general information and of course politics, something, I now find out, is more popular with Tongan readers. (Editor)

Matangi Tonga's online service contains a range of analytical articles on politics and economics, in a similar style to the magazine.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

The TBC's national AM service has programs aimed at all age groups. It is one of the few national AM public service stations in the region with an operational all-country transmission range. The TBC's FM commercial station, FM 90, only broadcasts to Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu and 'Eua and

targets youth. Television Tonga is restricted to Tongatapu and 'Eua. The TBC's Chief Programming Officer said, 'Television is the most popular because people can listen and see it at the same time. But a lot of people still prefer radio, particularly the islands that don't have television, like Ha'apai, Vava'u and the Niuas.'¹²

The *Tonga Chronicle* targets all age groups, and distributes the paper through bookshops on the main islands of Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u and 'Eua. There is no regular transport to the remote islands of Niuafu'oi and Niu Atoputapu (the Niuas). Tongans in Hawaii and Australia also buy the newspaper.¹³

Taumu'a Lelei's target audience is the public at large as well as Church readers and Tongans who live overseas. Youth is also an important target audience because 'it is their right to know and to read information and enabling them to make wise decisions'.

Taumu'a Lelei describes itself as a community newspaper and it publishes some news from rural areas and from the outer islands. It is distributed locally (Tongatapu and outer islands) and to nine parishes, as well as overseas. The Assistant Editor said, 'As there is no television in the outer islands, the *Taumu'a Lelei* serves as another form of information apart from the government broadcasting [Radio Tonga].'

Taimi 'o Tonga's target audience is general. According to the Editor, the newspaper tries to simplify the wording used so that it can be easily read and understood by everyone, regardless of their level of education:

When you write a story, you picture an old man somewhere in the bush, he is a farmer, like after working on the day, he comes home and his wife is cooking. And before eating he's picking up the paper to read. Now, if you write to that man, when that man understands, everyone else should understand ... That is why it makes our news reporting looks like an essay sometimes, because we try to get the message across to the people. You are not just writing to fulfil an academic description of what news is. If you do that in a country like Tonga, your news is worthless. Because if you write to the academic definition to what news is, just the basic, you need sometimes to define what is it you are writing about. I'll give you an example, before Parliament went. We did a news on what is Parliament, the formation of Parliament, what is Committee, for example the difference between the Committee and Parliament. They are two basic differences. So I have to explain it before Parliament opens, so that when I report later, people understand what I write about. I even draw up a picture of Parliament with People's rep.

The *Taimi 'o Tonga* is distributed to the main islands and air-freighted to all outer islands, including the Niuas.

Kele'a does not have a specific target audience because it is still in development, but said it is likely to target the educated elite, people who can read both Tongan and English. *Kele'a* is distributed only to the main centres.

Matangi Tonga targets readers from Form 4 upwards. Its online website has a worldwide audience and is currently getting 1.9 million hits a month from 77 countries. Previously it had subscribers to its magazine in 48 countries. The website is in English; however, the Editor said, 'A lot of people want us to put up some Tongan stories.'

2.5 Audience research

The TBC conducted an audience survey in 2004 but the results were not published. It hopes to do a survey every two years. The 2004 survey was developed and conducted by the TBC and included 600 randomly selected people in 20 villages. Findings indicated that viewers prefer to know what time each television program is broadcast because they also wanted to listen to the radio. 'I thought that people would love television more but people said they preferred the two. It's so funny that 75 per cent of the people we interviewed have the television on and were watching the program and at the same time listened to the radio.' (Chief Programming Officer)

The survey also covered pay television, and it found that only 3 per cent of the survey group had access to pay television, and 97 per cent could not afford it.

The TBC receives feedback by phone on its news and other programs. Ideas suggested by the public have resulted in talkback programs on specific issues on the radio and television.

The *Tonga Chronicle* has not done a formal survey: 'We don't have the time and the staff and the proper facility, but we can do a random survey by phone. But you have to have someone to sit

down and do it and to evaluate the responses from the respondents. This would take a lot of time.’ (Editor)

Taumu’a Lelei conducted an informal survey in 1997 using its own questionnaire. No details were provided on how many readers were surveyed, but the respondents said they wanted more political news and less church news. The paper also receives informal feedback via readers’ telephone calls and letters.

Taimi ’o Tonga has not done a survey of its readers. Informal feedback indicates that its readers are very interested in political stories. ‘For example, if I’m sick and I haven’t been doing any political reporting while the Parliament is running, we would certainly get comments from the people, “What’s happening to the political reporting?” So it is obvious that they are interested in politics.’ (Editor)

Matengi Tonga’s website provides an estimate of the number of visitors daily, and what stories they are reading. Currently, the *Matengi Tonga* does not have the software required to indicate where readers are located.

Some of the media said the public can respond in heated and/or a personal way about news content. For example, the *Matengi Tonga* receives a number of emails:

The only problems with some those emails, a lot of angry people and because it’s coming through the lines, there’s a whole lot of trash, talking about nonsense, expressing their views on the news. So, I’m very ruthless on that one, I only put online letters that make sense and letters that so contribute a lot to the issues. Personal, you know, speaking about the person on the news, they don’t like him ... and all sorts of things like that. We haven’t got anyone who swore at us, but actually angry [about] what’s on the news. (Editor)

2.6 NGO and government access

The TBC charges standard rates, with no discount. For radio and television, 15 minutes costs TOP33 and two hours is TOP602. The only free airtime is on radio, 7–8 pm Sundays, for religious programs.

The Editor of the *Tonga Chronicle* said:

Government departments are clever and put their public notices as press releases, and I call them and said that this is a public notice not news. If we publish any public notices from government departments without an order, the staff has to run after these departments to pay up. We kept asking them to bring their orders to our office before we print them. If not, they would avoid paying up. It is not only government departments, but other companies as well. If they don’t agree to pay for the public notices, I don’t allow the articles published in the newspaper. Funny thing that I have found out this year that there is a provision in the government regulation that they should send their advertisements/public notices and vacancies to [the public] in the Tonga Chronicle [but they sent them to the Talaki, a privately owned newspaper]. I told the Secretary to the Prime Minister’s office, to write a letter to all Heads of Departments to make the Tonga Chronicle a priority. How come they spent a half page colour advertisement in private newspapers instead of the government newspaper?

Taumu’a Lelei monitors press releases to see if they warrant follow-ups as new stories, and then assigns journalists to do this with the department or NGO concerned. Other press releases are treated as public information and charged.

Church content is free of charge because ‘the parishes are all running on a shoestring budget, and it is important to encourage our church branches to inform the church members and the public what mission activities they are engaged in.’ (Assistant Editor)

Taimi ’o Tonga does not charge NGOs or government departments a publication fee if an article is newsworthy and in the public interest. It does charge for advertisements.

Kele’a has a rate card and gives discounts depending on the amount of advertising that is booked.

Matangi Tonga has one standard set of rates for NGOs and businesses, and does not differentiate between the two sectors. To date, the government has not placed any advertisements with the magazine or online service.

2.7

Journalism resources

The TBC employs has 11 journalists (radio and television). Form 7 is the minimum level of education for journalism recruits. The TBC said it had a few investigative journalists, but did not specify how many. Salaries range from TOP2000-plus (cadet) to TOP9000 and over for journalists with degrees. Senior positions (sub-editors and editors) are paid up to TOP22,000 per annum.

The *Tonga Chronicle* has four journalists (including the Editor) working for the paper. The minimum level of education required for recruits is the Tonga School Certificate (Form 5), the Pacific Secondary School Certificate (PSSC, Form 6), or a Diploma in Information Technology.¹⁴ One journalist has a degree in journalism from a New Zealand university, and one journalist does investigative reporting. Journalists get paid TOP9.00 daily. With overtime taken into account, the average pay for cadets is TOP2800–3000-plus per annum. The salary for public servants with a Tonga School Certificate starts at TOP2500 per annum, and with a PSSC TOP2800–3000 per annum. The assistant editor receives TOP10,000 a year. The Editor said the salaries are low because it is government-owned, and that the *Chronicle* had lost four staff to other media organisations for this reason. There is a 5 per cent cost-of-living adjustment every year for government employees.

Taumu'a Lelei has three journalists: a manager/journalist, a senior journalist/desktop publisher, and a cadet. The respective years of experience are twelve years, eight years and three months. The newspaper requires recruits to have completed a Form 7 Certificate and/or tertiary education or a short-term course in basic journalism. The Assistant Editor has a Master of Arts in Communication (Journalism) from the University of Canberra, and one of the journalists has a Diploma in Pacific Journalism (USP). A cadet has also completed the Ministry for Labour, Commerce and Industries short course. Two of the journalists are investigative journalists.

The paper has a similar salary scale to the government, based on qualifications. The pay for senior journalists is TOP7000–14,000 (depending on qualifications), and cadets receive TOP2600–6000 per annum.

Taimi 'o Tonga employs three journalists in Tonga, three in New Zealand, one in Sydney, one in Hawaii and one in the US. It also has stringers on two outer islands in Tonga. Recruits need to have passed Form 6. Two of Tongan-based journalists have journalism certificates (Auckland University and USP). The Publisher has a degree in theology, and the Editor has a degree in politics. Four of the journalists are investigative journalists. The journalists based at the Tongan office have had previous journalism experience with other publications (including the *Tonga Chronicle*). The paper pays its cadets TOP400 fortnightly and a maximum of TOP800–1000 per fortnight for senior journalists and editors.

Kele'a currently has an editor, journalist and two cadets. The editor said the paper cannot afford to hire more experienced journalists and none of the journalists has a tertiary qualification. The editor has over 30 years media experience, while the journalist has had five years experience at the *Taimi 'o Tonga*. The Editor and journalist work on investigative reporting. Information on salaries was not available:

This is the only place in Tonga where we employ what we called a Tonga Peace Corps. From the beginning we work, like myself, we work like a volunteer, try to put the thing together. It's like trying to raise a baby. To make sure the baby starts crawling and then becomes a toddler, and then we need to see the baby stand up on its two feet. Then we start thinking of getting remunerated. (Editor)

Matengi Tonga has three journalists, one of whom is a cadet. The range of experience is four to thirty years. Two of the journalists are investigative journalists. Cadets need a minimum qualification of Form 7. Pay is TOP55 weekly for cadets, followed by an increment of TOP20 every six months. Salaries for more experienced journalists were not provided. The salary scale is dependent on qualifications and experience, with increases awarded to journalists who complete a qualification.

Media organisations said the main reasons journalists left were to do with family, moving overseas, further studies, and lack of satisfaction with the work.

Equipment resources

The TBC's television equipment includes cameras, computers, editing machines and a television deck. 'The television equipment costs thousands, because one camera costs TOP20,000 and we have at the moment 10 cameras, not to count the lighting, the screens and the editing machines. One editing machine cost TOP20,000; one television deck here cost TOP20,000. For the tapes, and we use different kind of tapes, it's TOP50 for one tape.' (Programming Manager)

The TBC Programming Manager said outer islands with telephones are easily accessible via telephone. The TBC has its own 24-hour server and has an arrangement with the TCC to pay TOP500 a month.

The TBC's Senior Manager said they need more news production equipment:

Every reporter needs an ibook or laptop; a tape recorder, easy access to cameras and mobile phones so when they go out to cover stories they can write their leading stories on the spot. It would speed up the work and when they come to the newsroom, the stories are already done and ready for final editing. Currently we have about two or three computers in the newsroom so they have to take turn in using them. The digital video cassette player, and videotape recorder for recording are also very much in demand for news production. If every reporter has a machine and a computer news production would be effective and fast.

The *Tonga Chronicle* has two Macintosh computers; however, one is broken and is more than 10 years old. The other computers in the office are PCs and the *Chronicle* has been unsuccessful in trying to network them (incompatibility problems). The paper also has two digital cameras, internet access and telephone access to the outer islands of Pangai, Ha'apai and Vava'u.

The Editor said the equipment is not adequate. The papers bought the PCs because 'they were cheap' and would like Macs. 'We only have one good computer where we do our layout of the paper. The rest of the PCs are used for straight typing of stories. We need more computers that would network; this would help the journalists and the layout staff to be effective in their news production.'

The journalists also do not have transport. The Editor said, 'When I come into this job there was no transport attached to this office. I asked for a transport but government under this new reform program, responded that it has no funds allocated for transport.'¹⁵

Taumu'a Lelei's journalists have access to five Macintosh computers (2 eMacs, 2 iMacs and one iBook) are used for news production. Other equipment includes a digital camera, a scanner, a printer, a television to monitor evening news, three tape recorders for interviews, telephone access to rural and outer island areas, and internet access.

The Assistant Editor of *Taumu'a Lelei* said the journalists needed laptop computers to take into the field so they could type up their stories and file them. The paper would also like to upgrade its email server to speed up the FTP (file transfer protocol) process to the press room in New Zealand in time to print. 'There is an extra fee charged if we don't meet our print deadline.' Currently it takes two hours to FTP one full-colour page.

Taimi 'o Tonga's production is done in New Zealand, but the office in Tonga has access to computers (Macs), a printer, a scanner, a disk burner, a digital camera, a video camera and camera mobile phones, and internet access on all computers.

Kele'a has two old computers donated by *Taimi 'o Tonga*. The journalists do not have tape recorders, but there is access to the internet and telephone access to the outer islands.

Matengi Tonga's journalists have computers, internet access, tape recorders, telephones and mobile phones.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

The TBC news bulletins are broadcast twice a day on radio (AM and FM), and once on television. The television and radio news is the same in content except that television has visuals. When Parliament is sitting, the TBC also has a special report on Parliament.

Radio Tonga is the only station with current affairs programs: Talking Point and a news magazine program, Tongan News Weekend, which both include reports from the outer islands; and Tonga This Week, a review of the weekly news, broadcast on radio and television. There are also a number of talkback programs on radio and television during the week, run by government departments.

Tonfon Pay TV has no local news, and OBN Television also has no local news but does have some panel discussion programs.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

TBC produces 6 to 8 local stories daily for radio and television in English and Tongan.

At the *Tonga Chronicle* the number of local stories varies, but there are usually 12. The paper aims to have 70 per cent local news stories and 30 per cent overseas news.

Taumu'a Lelei produces 15 to 20 local stories per edition.

Taimi 'o Tonga publishes 7 local stories per publication.

Kele'a produces at least 10 local stories weekly:

You know our country like Tonga there is not enough news flow. We cannot decide, we cannot predetermine the percentage of each overseas news, local news, commercial information, and social information. So we have to scratch around for information. Now for a weekly newspaper like Kele'a, well, I have to go along with whatever is around. If there is very little information of importance or of interest this week anything local, then, we have to try and localise information from the region or information from international region. I mean international information; we have to translate it and to make it interesting to the local audience, to the local readers. But otherwise, if government of Tonga can make it possible for a free flow of information instead of sitting on information at the Prime Minister's office. If they can let the people know by letting the media [have] information, then we will have 60 or 70 per cent local news. (Editor)

At *Matangi Tonga* local news stories vary from 1 to 3 and are posted on the website daily.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

According to the TBC's Senior Manager, topical issues are aired on the TBC. 'Here you really have to get out and talk to line ministries and as you know, it is very hard to get news from government, very, very hard. One has to struggle and beg them to give you some news for the public.'

Tonga Chronicle's governance priorities are health and education. 'We want to make a fair judgment more on the heavy news and the most topical ones of the week. We would like to put the best story on the front pages and other stories on other pages.' (Editor)

Taumu'a Lelei said its governance priorities include community stories, current political issues in the country, health, environment, feature stories and economic issues. *Taumu'a Lelei* runs a column on family health and another column on youth, addressing drug and alcohol awareness. 'We don't only cover political issues such as elections or government policies, but we also run articles on Tonga's voting system prior to the next election and the effects of government policies such as Tax Reform or Health to inform the public to enable them to make informed decisions for their future.' (Editor)

Taimi 'o Tonga's Editor said:

A lot of our political stories centre on people's representatives to Parliament [and] question their ability to reform our form of government to function healthy without corruption, bribery, bad decision, favouritism and all that, nepotism. It is very essential to our paper.

I just think that the job of the journalists right now in Tonga is very important and I don't think that most journalists are aware that it is to a large extent journalists' work to shape the country. And that is why we should be courageous to what we do and before that we must be just in our course, we must be ethical in the work that we do. Tonga is undergoing a period of reform whether we like it or not, economic, political or social. And one of the most powerful forces that shape those reform[s] is the media. We must inform the people correctly and completely so that they can partake in reform[s], in that political and social reform, in that economical reform.

Kele'a's Editor said the paper covers mostly everything:

We have been reporting on three or four workshops on good governance. We make it a habit to, whatever good governance is, mention anything worth reporting, we always get upfront to report it. Because not only we believe in good governance, we also believe in transparency and we also believe in accountability. Those three concepts are the areas [central] to our operations.

Matangi Tonga's Editor cited politics and the conduct of government as the online news service's governance priorities.

The TBC has received donor funds for programs to enhance the preservation of culture and customs (UNESCO); for programs on women and children (SPC); and for the weekly Media Council television programs (British and New Zealand High Commissions). None of the other media reported receiving donor funding to produce good governance media content. However, some have received donor funding for training and equipment.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

TBC journalists use interviews, press releases, PINA Nius Online and PACNEWS, and the TBC relays BBC news and news from Radio Australia and RNZI.

Tonga Chronicle's main news-gathering techniques are interviews and the internet, and for regional news, PACNEWS.

Taumu'a Lelei's Assistant Editor said, 'Press conferences, out there where the actions are; press releases and interviews with people, parliamentary sessions available on subscriptions, the internet and other information sources.' The newspaper also uses PINA Nius Online, Reuters, Australian Associated Press (AAP), Associated Press (AP), *Rugby Heaven*, the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Australian*.

Taimi 'o Tonga uses interviews, press releases, parliamentary proceedings, PACNEWS, RNZI, the BBC and Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Kele'a's main source is interviews:

But it's frustrating work in Tonga because people are more afraid to give out information, especially information about the government. So we have to try and work on rumours about telling so-and-so, that we already know the fact. It is very frustrating because most people are too afraid to talk to the media. I don't know whether that is part of the Tongan culture or Tongans are too conservative or Tongans are too scared. (Editor)

Kele'a draws its regional and overseas news from PACNEWS, Radio Australia, RNZI, the BBC, Reuters, AAP and AFP.

Matangi Tonga uses the internet, interviews and some press releases as background, and information from high commissions, the South Pacific Forum Secretariat, and material on development projects. *Matangi Tonga* does not use regional overseas news services: 'The reason we don't use them [is] because we are covering lots of local news and we know the local news, so there's no need for us to take news from other news agencies. We find them unreliable because anything goes on the online and most of the news is like a stock market bonanza.' (Editor)

2.12 Media access to government content

As mentioned, the TBC broadcasts special radio and television reports on Parliament when it is sitting. However, the TBC finds it difficult to get news from government and says the value of government press releases is limited:

We do have access to government press releases on its website but most of the time they are old and not updated. The materials are useful for background information only or to brief journalists. Most times we don't use them. (Chief Programming Officer)

Tonga Chronicle does not have first-hand access to government press releases:

We have to wait for government's initiative to make all government departments use only one website and the provider will be the Prime Minister's office. All government desks will secure a space from this website to update information and news stories and people/media/ NGOs or government have access to it ... but we are still waiting for this idea of form. The press releases we do receive are not really useful because they are late and sometimes we get them a couple of days later or one week later. They have the press releases in their office and I have to call to the Prime Minister's office. (Editor)

Taumu'a Lelei receives press releases, letters or phone calls from some government departments informing it about their forthcoming activities, press conferences, events and functions.

Like the *Chronicle*, the *Taumu'u Lelei* was also concerned about available government information, which it described as 'not current and vague', and the cost of access to information:

We subscribe to Parliament Minutes (TOP1.00 per issue) and we collect these minutes every two days of the week. If we want a court judgment, we go and pay for this; that is TOP2.00 per sheet. If the court judgment has 56 pages at TOP2.00 a page, it will cost us TOP112.

On 8 October, the Chief Justice announced his judgment on Taione and Others vs Kingdom of Tonga. We were told that the brief judgments [in both Tongan and English] to be purchased from the Ministry of Justice's office for TOP3.00 per page. (Assistant Editor)

Taimi 'o Tonga's Editor said that the only consistent information received by the paper was from the Reserve Bank:

I must admit that most must be hunted down, we have to look for them, and ask them. Sometimes it's not that they hide information. I think government just basically do not know how to work with media.

When something goes wrong, they say, 'media needs training', 'media needs training', not them. If you ring them and say, 'Look I'm from the media, can you possibly help me with this information?' The basic reaction is to hide. They said, 'Oh, that particular leader is not here at the moment,' when you know they were at work ... They are not used to being criticised, they are not used to being scrutinised and there were certain areas that were never criticised before. When you do that they think you are politically insensitive, you are culturally insensitive. It doesn't matter whether you are saying the truth or not, you are just totally insensitive outright. And I don't think government is completely ready to work with the media. They should get trained not us. And that's such they have been very hostile to media. For example, they went right up to amending the constitution. (Editor)

The Editor also said much of the government information is late. 'When it is incorrect they are not corrected. It is only useful when they provide details we can't get from anywhere else.'

Kele'a's Editor said that the media can access whatever the government decides to let the media know, as well as information on the government website:

But because they keep everything secret, we have to try and find out. That's why often in order to get access to government information, you can't go through the front door, you have to climb through the window. But I can tell you that they don't want the people to know the whole truth or the whole story. Because if they did, then there will be little speculation by the media on what is going on in the government. Otherwise most of our stories are based on speculation, on assumptions, on guesses, guess what. (Editor)

Matangi Tonga receives a lot of press releases from the government but does not use many. 'Simply, because they have got a bad habit of giving it to us when they send it to everyone else. So by the time it gets to us, it is old news. So we just can't take it.' (Editor)

2.13 Constraints on local news production

For the TBC the number of stories is influenced by the availability of staff and the available timeslots for television and radio.

Tonga Chronicle cited lack of mobile technology such as computers and telephones to enable staff greater flexibility in covering and filing stories.

Taumu'a Lelei said deadlines, time and the available space given for the editorials and advertisements, and lack of access to laptops to enable staff greater flexibility in covering and filing stories where they are happening.

Taimi 'o Tonga's Editor said:

I think it would come down to the specifics, we already have divided out the paper to what space to go to news and that to go to advertisement. And we try to fulfil the number of pages. That has been divided among the political section, community, sports and overseas. That's the only factor. Advertisement does not go beyond the 60 per cent.

Kele'a cited the limited number of journalists and equipment available.

2.14 Threats to funding

The Editor of the *Tonga Chronicle* said:

I think the government did withhold funding with the previous management, but we have experienced that advertisers would withdraw their advertisements if the paper were two to three days late. I refused to refund this because the work has been done and it was not our fault that the paper is late. It is the government printing department's fault that they did not finish printing the newspaper in time.

Taumu'a Lelei has not had government or corporate funds withdrawn. However, when the new press laws were operational, the government did ask the Assistant Editor to explain an editorial:

A message came to the office informing me that the Registrar and her team, Department of Communications, Prime Minister's office requested me to meet them. The Registrar was

concerned about the content of one editorial that was published in the paper that week. The article [was] titled 'The amendment of the Constitution was illegal'. Their complaint was that in the editorial the government was not given a right to respond to what Mr Sunia Fili, the People's Representative from 'Eua Island, was saying that the amendment of the Constitution, clause 7, was illegal. He quoted this from the Supreme High Court Judgment, and government did not like this. I asked the Registrar to point out from the article what part of the content that they alleged as libel. She confirmed that there was nothing wrong, the editorial was okay, but I should have given the government the right to response. Two other Editor/sub-Editors were also called in to this meeting to dress them down. We hardly get government public notices/ads to publish in our paper and I don't know why. It could be because it is a Church newspaper. (Assistant Editor)

Taimi 'o Tonga's Editor said there was a Cabinet decision in late 1998 or 1999 that no government department or statutory board would advertise or give information to the *Taimi 'o Tonga*:

I read the cabinet decision and think the main concern was that they saw the Taimi 'o Tonga as the government opposition. It was the information in the content of the news that they were concerned about because it was based on uprooting corruption in government, high level corruption, bad decisions made by the king, political decision, economic decision by the king, by the prime minister, by the crown prince, by the cabinet ministers. There were sedition and charges before my time, defamation charges before my time, also I think it peaked and intensified during my time. I can tell you there was one time three to four months consecutively, I would work during the day and go to court during the night, go to court during the day and work during the night. Because you know, paper production is different, it never stops, there's a particular deadline you have to meet. When [the sedition charge] came to the Supreme Court, the government gave up and said they don't want to charge me any more. I wasted my time at the court. But it hasn't changed our course, it hasn't discouraged us. (Editor)

In regards to the government withdrawing advertising from *Kele'a*, the Editor said that the government has not advertised in *Kele'a* and it does not believe it will:

I think maybe the government has a policy not to advertise with the Kele'a. I don't know why, maybe they don't like me or they don't like the Kele'a. Maybe because the Chronicle, they can run their notice or whatever in the Chronicle, maybe free of charge with them, but they never advertise or never run any notice with the Kele'a.

According to the *Matangi Tonga* Editor, the government never advertises with the *Matangi Tonga*. 'We don't know why, but we just don't bother even to find out, ask them why they don't.'¹⁶

2.15 Industry training

The TBC has its own training division attached to the administration department. It identifies what training programs are needed for staff and has a long-term plan to have at least five staff with a degree in journalism and/or communication by 2010. The TBC does not provide any on-the-job training. It organises outside training delivery:

With the program, we are looking starting next month, there is a consultant coming from New Zealand for two weeks, training on news presentation mainly, how do you produce news program, and how do you speak with sincerity to the people as an announcer and then following that, we are having another training coming up on October based on voice training, that means news presenters for announcement. And then we are hoping that to begin 2006 we would be able here at the program department, we'll be able to send one or two of our staff members for degree-level training in institute like USP, three to four years, that's the degree level. (Chief Programming Officer)

The Editor of the *Tonga Chronicle* has submitted a request to the New Zealand High Commission to fund one of the journalists for a month's work attachment at a community newspaper in New Zealand as, he said, 'A community paper is more relevant for Tongan needs than the *New Zealand Herald*.'

One staff member did a short journalism course through the Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries as part of the Ministry's outreach program for unemployed youth. It was an eight-week course: six weeks spent in the classroom focusing on journalism (basic writing, interview skills and coverage of stories) and two weeks on work attachment. The students produced a newsletter, but could not distribute it because of the new newspaper licence laws. According to the

Assistant Editor of the *Taumu'a Lelei*, the project did not continue due to lack of funds, and lack of understanding from the Minister and senior officers about the need for journalism development in Tonga.

In 2004 the Finance Minister informed all government departments that the government was not going to pay for staff tuition anymore. 'This hasn't stopped me from encouraging the staff, saying that if they want a career, you have to sacrifice yourself.' (Editor)

Taumu'a Lelei has on-the-job training for cadets in news writing and the use of digital cameras. In addition to this, cadet journalists have completed short training courses at one of the local computer training centres in desktop publishing and graphic design. The courses usually ran for up to 56 hours and offered a Certificate of Achievement. The newspaper pays the training fees.

Taimi 'o Tonga like the other media listed here has informal on-the-job training, and can send cadets for work attachments in New Zealand.

Kele'a has informal hands-on training, and has not developed a training program yet. The Editor said, 'The training is done through trying to get the deadline and showing people at the same time this is how to do this.'

The Editor of the *Kele'a* said:

You have to differentiate between a reporter and a journalist. A journalist is a person who reads the story and is able to analyse the story and write an account with his own interpretation and his own opinion, interpreting after analysing. A reporter is someone who reports only what he sees or what he hears. There's a slight difference. A journalist is more of a person who writes editorials, feature stories. That is what is lacking in Tonga. They need journalists.

Matangi Tonga's senior journalists provide on-the-job training for cadets, and one has completed a training certificate from the Commonwealth Press Union online.

The USP Centre in Tonga does not offer media or journalism training, but it is possible to study some electives toward a journalism degree.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

The majority of media surveyed follow the code of ethics developed by the Media Council. The exception is the *Tonga Chronicle*, which follows this code as well as the government's code of ethics for civil servants. No details were provided on how the individual media organisations enforce the Media Council code.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

There is a national media association, the Media Council Incorporated, which has a chair, deputy, secretary and treasurer. All positions are voluntary. The council is funded through membership fees, TOP100 per year per organisation. It has also received funds from High Commissions, and from PINA and UNESCO for Media Freedom Day.

The following media have not paid membership fees and are not members: *Talaki*, *Tonga Star*, *Tonga Chronicle*, *Tohi Fanongonongo* (free Wesleyan Church of Tonga monthly newspaper), *Ofa ki Tonga* (Tokaikolo Church monthly newspaper), *Tala Kei Kapa* newsletter, TBC, FM 88.6 Nuku'alofa, FM 89.1 and FM 93.1.

The Council has a Complaints Committee with four members drawn from different media organisations. People with a complaint about media content are advised to contact the editor of the particular media organisation in the first instance:

If the person is not happy, they can lodge a formal complaint to the Complaints Committee and the Committee takes up the case and follows the process through to the end. The decision made will be published. The idea is to resolve the complaints out of court. (Chair)

The Council has a training committee and would like to run its own training programs, and ensure that there is follow-up training and continuity. The Council said it needs an office to enable it to develop long-term plans for training and capacity building.

The Media Council has a weekly television program on Tonga Television on a range of issues, including training funded by the British and New Zealand High Commissions.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

- Journalism ethics and responsibilities are areas that could be further developed, with the Media Council taking the lead to improve the level of industry professionalism and conduct.
- The Media Council needs to set up an office to enable it to be more proactive and ensure that media organisations comply with the code of ethics. PINA should support the local media councils to develop their capacity.
- The Media Council also needs to develop the capacity to produce information for the public on media roles and responsibilities.
- The Media Council should invite government officials and government media officers to be members of the Council so that they can get a better appreciation of the need for media advocacy.
- Government media officers should also be invited to media industry training to improve inter-sectoral understanding and networking.
- Recognition and accreditation of certificates granted from training and workshops conducted in the Pacific Forum countries is needed.
- Awards should be given to local media organisations or local journalists in Pacific nations who courageously stand up for freedom of speech, opinion and the press during periods when governments attempt to limit and regulate press freedom through legislation, and also when governments use culture and tradition to limit free speech, opinion and the press.
- PINA and the national media councils should establish a Pacific group of trainers and utilise their skills for in-country training and workshop programs.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

The Government Information Unit was set up in 1990 and, as noted earlier, is located in the Prime Minister's office. The functions of this unit are:

- To produce accessible information on government initiatives, activities, policies and regulations that are deemed as public information.
- To provide clarification or correction of government information as or whenever applicable.
- The prompt dissemination of government information to the public through the unit's website as well as regular press releases and weekly television and radio programs.
- To collect and store government information in computer archives.

Its focus is public relations and media-related matters to do with the Prime Minister's office. Individual ministries provide the unit with press releases, which are posted on the government website.

The unit issues press releases to all media organisations and, when there is a national event, it tries to contact all media to cover such functions. 'I guess we are partners in information production and dissemination of news.' (Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, Prime Minister's office)

In addition to the Government Information Unit, interviews were conducted with the following ministries that produce regular media content: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries, the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which produces irregular media content. Other regular government producers are the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Police, Prisons and Fire Services, and some details are provided on their programs.

The Ministry of Fisheries used to have a good information unit and ran campaigns such as 'the lobster man', which focused on educating the people to 'stop poaching baby lobsters'. Unfortunately its office was burnt down in 2003.

Human resources

There are four staff members in the Government Information Unit: a deputy secretary; a senior assistant secretary; an assistant secretary; and a computer operator.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food has seven officers full-time in its media production unit. Two work on a quarterly newsletter, two produce radio programs, two produce television programs and one officer maintains the library of recordings.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not have media officers. All its senior officers are responsible for writing up their own media statements.

The Ministry of Health has two officers who specifically handle news production, and four to five other officers who assist as required. 'We are still a long way to setting up a real information unit. We are still a long way for us to really satisfy the consumers. We use TBC personnel but it's costing.' (Acting Chief Medical Officer)

The Business Development Services Unit (Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries) does not have a media officer, and shares the media responsibilities among its officers.

The Department of Environment (Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources) has one officer who coordinates media and publications. 'Because this is just one of their many responsibilities, a coordinated effort to produce media content is done with all sections of the department.' (Deputy Secretary)

3.2 Government media processes

The Deputy Secretary to Cabinet said of the Government Information Unit:

We don't have a set process. We try. Most times the issues that we take are 'spur of the moment' issues. The best we could do is to contact all media to come, whether it is a press conference or government function. We have not been able to have a set process for media briefing. I know when the unit was established, 'Eseta [Fusitu'a, First Secretary to Cabinet and Registrar] was directly responsible in operating and managing the unit in the 1990s. She had a weekly press conference with all the media giving them government news. [It is not happening now.] She did this as often as necessary. For example, with the new ministerial appointments or any major changes or policy change, we try to release information as soon as it comes to hand.

Most of the press releases are in English.

The Government of Tonga has its own website. It contains information about government and some line ministries. Some ministries' information is still to be added. As noted earlier, the media is critical of the lack of government information available and its timeliness. The Deputy Secretary to Cabinet said:

We do contact and approach the media when we have information to release to the public and normally the media is very receptive. Sometimes the media would be critical of us because of the information given to media. This is their privilege but in general we feel that we have a good working relationship with them. I do notice this year [compared with] our concerns on the previous years, that the standard of journalism in general amongst the media has been improved. I don't know what is the perspective of the media organisations themselves. Now, there are so many newspapers coming out in Tonga. I think the more newspapers we have, the [more] variety of information media give out. You have a variety of choices depending on who you think is balanced in their editorials.

Hansard is available and the minutes are on sale for journalists and civil society for TOP1.00 for a copy of one sitting day. Each day's minutes are available the next day and staff at the Parliament office print copies of each proceeding. People who are interested in Hansard collect their copies from the Parliament office in town.

In response to complaints by Members of Parliament (MPs) about the content of parliamentary coverage, one television crew (a TBC camera operator and journalist) now covers parliamentary proceedings. The Speaker of the House reviews the recording and advises on what content to include in the TBC radio and television programs. From Monday to Thursday excerpts of the proceedings are broadcast on Television Tonga news, and on Fridays the government purchases a 30-minute timeslot to broadcast a television program featuring parliamentary debates. In addition to this, there is a half-hour summary on radio each evening during the sessions, except Fridays as there is no Parliamentary sitting.

3.3 Government department media content

The Government Information Unit relies mainly on press releases and media conferences, with the occasional television program on the TBC.

The Ministry of Agriculture is the biggest ministry and produces a variety of information: TBC radio programs five times a week; television programs five times a month; and a quarterly newsletter. The content covers a diversity of issues: information to help growers with their yearly crops and, in particular, the squash season; women's development in the villages, such as healthy eating and cooking the right food, gardening, time management and family business in the home, such as weaving and sewing; youth in agriculture and as livestock keepers; and the overuse of pesticides in farming and promoting natural farming.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs mainly produces press releases but it has also produced a documentary on the Vava'u Development Program, a television program on immigration and a radio talkback program, 'so people could ask questions about what we are doing'. The Ministry's media content is 'demand related', rather than regularly scheduled.

The Ministry of Health produces a daily radio program and two to three television programs a week. Content focuses on prevention of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, a conjoined venture of all church leaders, Ministry of Health and government; typhoid, German measles, and smoking and alcohol campaigns. The Ministry relies on donor funding from the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO and the SPC for its media production. The Acting Chief Medical officer said:

I think we would almost say that we never have enough funds, but in my experience I do not feel that money is the problem. I feel the problem is us, knowing exactly what we want and know what to do. The funds are there.¹⁷

The Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries has a weekly radio program and a television program once a month. It focuses on licences, price control, and squash growers. The Business Development Services Unit in the Ministry produces a weekly radio program; a television program twice a month on Television Tonga; a quarterly newsletter; and newspaper articles in the *Kele'a*. The focus of its media content is promoting entrepreneurship, self-employment and business development. The unit develops training programs and workshops for small businesses to strengthen their capacity to make their business successful. The unit also send out press releases to small businesses, the general public, and the press, and calls press conferences as required. Its media content is produced in Tongan and English. The unit's annual budget for media production limits what it can produce on television and radio. It pays the TBC TOP37 for a 15-minute program on radio, and TOP100 for a 30-minute television program.

The Department of Environment (Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources) has produced television and radio spots, panel discussions for television and radio, and some documentaries, posters, brochures, newsletters, press releases and print media articles. It has a fortnightly television program and a radio program. The content focuses on keeping the environment clean. It is concerned with the waste management project in the country, the use of pesticides in farming and water pollution.

The Ministry of Education's programs air every morning from 9 to 10 am on Radio Tonga. The content is aimed at primary schools and focuses on mathematics, reading, Tongan language and customs, and story telling in Tongan. The department also uses this time to announce any public notices to all schools. Teachers and students from primary schools turn on their radios and listen to the one-hour program.

The Traffic Department (Ministry of Police, Prisons and Fire Services) runs a radio and television program on traffic hazards in peak hours; educating the public about using roundabouts; talking about driving licences and informing the public to renew their drivers' licences. The Crime Department produces a weekly update on crime in Tonga through radio and television news coverage each week.

The Commissioner for Public Relations (CPR) in the Ministry of Justice ran a fortnightly radio program for two months about its work, but the funding ran out, and it was not producing media content at the time of the survey.

The TBC charges the respective government departments to air their television and radio programs. 'We do pay like everyone else and the only difference would be that I chose the spot for the Prime Minister's program, at 7.30 pm, Thursday once a week.' (Deputy Secretary to Cabinet)

3.4 Media governance priorities

The Government Information Unit said its priority is 'whatever policy comes out at the time':

For example, the Judgment from Chief Justice Webster MBE that came out on the 8 October 2004: Taione & Others vs Kingdom of Tonga in favour of Taione & Others, it was a national news and we put it out on the Prime Minister's website as a quick response. We came out with an immediate response in that that we agree in principle with the decision according to the law. It is the area where government and court can be common. This is how we try to meet the needs of the media because we have been blamed by media that we are slow in response to national events that are happening in the country. From my own experience, we always try even though the feedback says that the press releases are too late and they don't give them [media] what they want. Whenever there's an issue we try as soon as we can to put out the information, as much as we can put in. (Deputy Secretary to Cabinet)

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food focuses on effective farming techniques and crops, developmental issues, nutrition and small market businesses.

The priority governance issues for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are foreign policy, immigration, national security and facilitating the work of the government with regards to contacts with overseas governments.

The Ministry of Health media content priorities are communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS, and tobacco-related issues.

The Department of the Environment's governance priorities are producing information and campaigns to improve the environment.

The CPR said governance was its main focus as the office is tasked with ensuring that the government practises good governance; however, as noted, it no longer produces any media content.

3.5 Target audiences

Most of the ministries target all of the public. The Ministry of Agriculture targets farmers, women in the villages, youth and the public in general. The Ministry of Education targets primary school children and teachers.

The target audience for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ranges from all Tongans, to people who want to migrate to Tonga and businesspeople.

The Ministry of Health's target audiences vary depending on the topic (breastfeeding or children's health is targeted at mothers), but most of the time the programs are targeted at the public in general.

Business and Development Services' target audiences are the existing businesses and potential start-up businesses, and consumers to inform them about the *Consumer Protection Act*.

The Department of Environment targets all age groups, and has specific resources for students (primary and secondary) and for the community in general.

The Government Information Unit referred to monitoring government media content to see how it is used:

I always tap into Planet Tonga website to test this effective because they reproduced our press releases, and if not, they will publish online what we have put on our website. Planet Tonga Online is published by 'Ana Pela, a Tongan who is living in the United States.¹⁸ There are other websites that I also tap into to check whether they have received our national press releases on their sites, but the one who does it more, is Planet Tonga. Radio New Zealand and Australia announced it as well, but only half of the press released [it] and the other half is opinionated. (Deputy Secretary to Cabinet)

3.6 Qualifications and training

The Government Information Unit has had difficulty finding formally qualified officers:

We have been looking out for graduates in journalism and in public relations but we have never been able to attract anyone. I don't know why until September last year, when we put out our vacancies advertisements in June. There was a young woman who applied and she has a degree in International Communications. This was the first time we have been able to get someone with that qualification. Prior to this, we were able to recruit two people who were

BA degrees. Even though they were not directly qualified in journalism or public relations but they had some work experience with television news castings. We recruited them. We also recruited someone who was an English teacher in Tonga High School. She was good. (Deputy Secretary to Cabinet)

Some of the unit's officers attended a Press Laws workshop run by the Pacific Media Initiative. 'We do get invited to some of the training programs that are conducted by the Media Council Incorporated in Tonga but it's time, can't afford to attend a whole day program because we would be neglecting our own responsibilities.'

Ministers and heads of departments received media training in 2000. The training was requested by the Government Information Unit and conducted over three days with a trainer from Radio Australia. It was funded by AusAID.

In 2003 the government invited SAMBA, a media company from Fiji, to reorganise the government's media communications system and provide further media training including television interviewing.¹⁹ SAMBA is a private company that works with the government of Fiji.

When asked about the media training needs of the Department of Communication, the Deputy Secretary to Cabinet made a distinction between media and communications, and said that officers required training in communications:

We are in communications and we have just established the office late last year. But every year we do offer our staff training courses where they can travel to Asia, such as Korea, and attend the International Telecommunications Union training courses offered. We are a member and they funded these training. There are more than 10 courses offered each year.

One officer from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food is studying journalism at USP; others have had some short-course training and learned on the job:

We have done [all seven staff] some short courses. Two of our officers who are producing our monthly newspaper have attended a short course on graphic design, so did the librarian, and our radio producers have attended courses on radio production in rural areas. Due to lack of funds our television producers did not have the opportunity, however we requested TBC and Television Tonga if they could come over to do work attachment at the station. (Radio and Television Producer, Department of Agriculture)

The producer said further training was required in basic writing and editing of stories or news releases so that the content is clear and the target audiences easily understand the information.

Officers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs working with the media have had no media training.

According to the Acting Chief Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health, some basic media and computing experience is necessary to work in this area. A few officers have completed short course training in media production but no details were provided.

The officers in the Business Development Services Unit have not done any on-the-job media training.

Officers in the Department of Environment have no experience or qualifications in media. The officer who coordinates the department's media output has had only two weeks training in recording and non-linear editing and is learning on the job.

One of the investigating officers at the CPR used to work for the *Chronicle*, and has completed short media courses overseas.

3.7 Equipment

The Government Information Unit has a server, a video recorder, an old video camera (camcorder) and a digital camera for taking pictures for its website. It uses TBC or OBN equipment for television programs, and said its main problem is a staff shortage and lack of time.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food has computers, tape recorders and one camera. It borrows equipment from Television Tonga to produce news. The Radio and Television Producer at the Ministry of Agriculture said the current equipment was not adequate as it does not allow them to improve the quality of their news production. 'I am concerned about our capacity for media advocacy with the little equipment we have now.'

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has computers with audiovisual editing capacity, internet access, tape recorders and a digital camera. The Ministry does not record or edit its documentaries —

the TBC does this. 'So the actual editing is done by them, but we tell them what to take out and what not.'

The Ministry of Health has a video camera, but no computer or editing facilities. It takes unedited videotapes to the TBC for editing:

We have not the facility to produce news productions at all. We don't have a computer and we don't have an editing machine. We take our videotapes that have been taped to TBC and they edit this for us. They cannot do inserts and we need this. Now our online has been connected to our website, Ministry of Health, and this would be used by this unit. We have a lot of problems now because our television program is like a radio program on television, because we lack the facility and the television people at TBC don't have the capacity now to insert our program and I don't know whether it costs too much to be able to approve or disapprove. Mostly we go there to TBC studio and they put a camera in front of us and we talk. (Acting Chief Medical Officer)

The Business Development Unit has computers and internet access.

The Department of Environment has a digital camera, microphone, headphones, camera stand, computer, television and video deck. All radio programs are recorded at the department then taken to Radio Tonga for broadcast. Some television programs are also recorded in the department and some at Television Tonga. Television spots are done outside the department with Xtreme Productions, Kolomotu'a. The majority of printed materials are produced in-house. The department said its staff needed training in camera shooting, scriptwriting, editing and equipment operation, as this would cut production costs in the long run. The Acting Director of the Department of Environment said its priority was to hire media personnel, including a desktop publishing officer.

3.8 Government-media relationships

In addition to the comments earlier from the Government Information Unit on media access to government information, the Acting Chief Medical Officer from the Ministry of Health said his department has a good relationship with media organisations, but the journalists have difficulty accessing information:

From time to time we use newsletters and press releases but you know I found out that the press are not so impressive because every time we called them to a press conference, they can't seem to sort things out and they don't ask questions and I think they are shy. So we don't find that the print is a good way to get our message.

In other countries, if they have a press conference, the ideal way in spreading the message. From my experience, every time we called a press conference, hardly anyone would ask any provoking or probing questions. They just record what we tell them so I personally do not feel that we are able to utilise this aspect of the media.

The media should be able to analyse for us and put it out to the public in a simple language so that people could understand. Media should make the news more tasty to make it readable. Lots of our medical materials are pretty raw and it needs fine-tuning because the public do find it very difficult to understand. I would like the media to come and interview me and I can give you articles. (Acting Chief Medical Officer)²⁰

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

- The media report that government press releases can be vague and untimely, and that press conferences are limited. For its part, government believes that it is in reasonably regular contact with the media.
- Government information such as court judgments and Parliament minutes (not including press releases) are charged TOP1.00 per Parliament minute (one sitting) and TOP2.00 per page for the court judgments in the kingdom.
- Media training is not a priority in the country. Government training programs or scholarships do not encourage journalism training.
- Government-media relationships can be tense, as government appears to view the media with suspicion.
- The amendment of the Constitution (Clause 7) and the media regulation and press laws further illustrate the tensions that can exist between government expectations of the media, media freedom, and the rights of citizens to be informed.

- There have been some government–media training workshops, and some consideration could be given to further workshops and conferences to improve the working relationship of the two sectors.
- A number of government departments are active media contributors (in particular to radio and television). They require further training to increase their capacity to produce interesting and effective programs, and to ensure that there is a core of trained officers, so that one person is not responsible for all of a department’s media output.
- In order to further build capacity, media production needs to be included in departmental workplans and budgets. Officers involved in this area also require position descriptions with the media duties listed.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

According to the Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries, there are 101 NGOs registered under the *Incorporated Societies Act 1984*, and 51 registered NGOs under the *Charitable Trusts Act 1993*, a total of 152 NGOs. The Tonga Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO) was established in 1990. It has over 170 member organisations in Tongatapu, as well as members in the outer islands. TANGO does not have an office. It has a floating desk and has no full-time employees.

The NGOs that are producing media content on governance issues are: the Tonga National Council of Churches (TNCC); Caritas Tonga; Tonga Trust; TANGO; Catholic Women’s League (CWL); Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT); Human Rights and Democracy Movement; Kotoa Movement; Human Rights Council; Media Council Incorporated; Langafonua Tongan National Women’s Centre; Red Cross, Salvation Army; Fili Tonu (Right Choice Youth Movement); Tonga National Youth Council; Hospital Trust; Iron-man Ministry (for deportees); Tui, ‘Ofa and Amanaki (for the ‘differently abled’); ex-students associations (nine schools) in Tonga; Ma’a Lahi; Christian Churches; and Life Line.

Of these, about five NGOs make regular use of the media and were interviewed. They are the CWL, Langafonua National Women’s Centre, TANGO, TNCC and the Tonga Trust.

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

CWL produces a range of media content, with one of the aims being to ensure that NGO activities are transparent and accountable. CWL issues press releases on women’s issues, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Legal Literacy Project. This is a community paralegal training program that covers issues of economic development, social development and development goals, the human rights convention and the Constitution of Tonga. CWL’s main media involvement relates to promoting the CEDAW and it has a project officer working in this area.

It has produced videos and television programs in collaboration with Coconut Production (CP).²¹ One of CWL’s video programs, *Celebrating Women*, looks at the lives of six women in Tonga who do voluntary work. CWL has also produced television spots on domestic violence, breastfeeding, safe drinking water, gender equality and education. It has published two newsletters but lacks the resources (funds and staff) to do this on a regular basis. CWL would like to produce radio programs but also does not have the funds for this. Its most regular media content is an article in the *Taumu’a Lelei* newspaper as this is free.

The videos and television spots are in Tongan and English with subtitles; the newsletters are in English and the articles in the *Taumu’a Lelei* are in Tongan.

Langafonua produces radio and television programs on the TBC. Its media content covers: the environment; gender and development awareness programs; the importance of education; women’s health issues such as HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy and prostitution; CEDAW; preservation of culture and tradition; general education and programs to inform and educate families. Langafonua has also helped script and film three television documentaries: the Dog Population Control Project; a Gender and Development Awareness; and Solid Waste Management. All media content is in Tongan.

TANGO produces press releases, a newsletter and organises press conferences. The aim of TANGO's media content is to inform its members and the public about the mission of the association so that it is an effective network. TANGO's President said:

We prioritised networking with our members through our newsletter, press release, community project monthly reports and updates project activities; the use of telephones and fax and even our 'kava-bowl' where men gathers to drink kava in the evenings and tapa making and gathering for women at village halls.

TNCC has a weekly television and radio program, runs a talkback program, and issues press releases. The radio program covers issues for families, such as agriculture, health, law and order, and human rights, and can involve a panel discussion. The articles produced by TNCC focus on justice issues, family care and nation building.

The TNCC said its media governance priorities include church and spiritual matters, justice and human development issues and speaking out against the violation of human rights:

We inform member churches and media offices, NGOs about training workshops such as Ecumenical Workshop, Pacific Migrants Strategic Plan Workshop, CEDAW workshops, to name a few. At times the content of our press release would focus on calling all Christians in Tonga to gather and pray for the nation, for His Majesty and his household and those in leadership and the people of Tonga. A most recent one was when three ministers were asked to vacate their ministerial posts in government namely, the Minister of Police, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General and Minister of Labour and Commerce with no clear reasons given to the public. The people were at a loss waiting for His Majesty to talk to them but nothing happened. The TNCC, joined by other Churches in the country called for a national prayer day and the venue was named. (Secretary-General)

The TNCC said it uses its 'media governance well and the result is phenomenal'. (Secretary-General)

Tonga Trust produces media content irregularly. Its current focus is Pesticide Awareness and Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), which is a public advocacy program. The Trust has produced panel discussions on Television Tonga that explore the issues raised by PASA. It is also working with local video production company, CP, on a PASA video project. The Executive Director of the Tonga Trust is the former Chair of Human Rights and Democracy Movement. He said:

There's no such thing as an impartial media. People are either aligned one way or the other. The government media publishes things that, or broadcasting what the government wants. And every other media, I mean, is either for government or against government. The problem I see is there's a lot of newspaper who has taken on the advocacy role which the NGOs should do.

I remember, when I was with the Human Rights and Democracy Movement, we were producing things which were being produced by the newspapers as their own thing. I see the role of the newspaper and the media is that they are independent of both sides. What the media role's to give both perspective and that's why I found it difficult to work with the media when I was in the Human Right and Democracy Movements, because the media outlets themselves were judging what I was producing. That's not their role. Their role is to give it to the public.

I remember when we put out a media release about the amendment about the common law act, at the end of 2000 and in the end when you guys produce the story we never got mentioned. This is the sort of things when the newspapers themselves take on the advocacy roles. You take on the position against the amendment, I have no problem with that but at least you should have acknowledged that we were the ones that initially gave it to you.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

CWL targets mainly women 'but at the same time we also want men to read and learn, become educated about women's issues.' (CEDAW Project Coordinator)

Langafonua's target audience is women and the family at home.

TANGO aims at the grassroots of the community, especially the poor and those who need assistance.

TNCC's audiences are TNCC members, church leaders and Christians.

The Tonga Trust said the PASA content is aimed at farmers and their families.

There is no formal process in place to evaluate the impact of the NGO media content, but there is an informal community network that supplies anecdotal feedback (telephone, community meetings, responses to calls for National Prayer Days by church leaders via the media, and so on).

4.4 NGO media capacity

The CEDAW Project Coordinator at the CWL produces the media content on a voluntary basis. The Coordinator said:

I think that it is important that every NGO has a media officer. It is crucial for the organisation so that this officer is able to inform the local media about what the organisation is planning to do, what the organisation has done and what the organisation hope to achieve, objective and stuff on a regular basis. I think it's crucial, because NGO is set up for the people of Tonga ...

The Langafonua Centre is staffed by volunteers who are not paid. The only exception is the Secretary/Communications Officer who gets TOP50 a week contribution from the centre. The Communications Officer does part-time work on media production. She is assisted in her media production work by another officer when required.

TANGO has a part-time Secretary/Press Officer assisted by the President. TANGO said this is not enough. The officer is paid a token amount as TANGO cannot afford a full salary.

TNCC's officers are all volunteers and have other paid work. There is one officer producing media content, assisted by the Secretary-General. This officer divides his workload equally between media production and youth work. Approximately two hours per day of his time is spent on news production.

The Tonga Trust has three officers who spend part of their time on media production, about five hours a week. They prepare the panel discussions on Television Tonga, deciding themes of the discussion, arranging panel participants, contacting media outlets, writing press releases and moderating the discussions.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

The CEDAW Project Coordinator at the CWL said that the officer producing media content requires a media qualification and experience but did not give specific details of the requirements.

Langafonua requires no formal qualification or experience, and the officer learns on the job while undertaking training. 'With us at the Langafonua we don't need someone, an expert ... It is experience that gains. She has attended a lot of training on that. So it's not really from a book, it is a practice.' (Secretary)

Ideally TANGO would like an officer with qualifications in media studies or journalism, as well as a certificate in management to manage the office. The President and part-time Press Officer producing media content have no formal media qualifications or any on-the-job media training.

TNCC volunteers do not have any media background or training. The officer who produces media content learns on the job.

The Tonga Trust does not require specific media qualifications or experience, 'just the ability to be knowledgeable about these issues. So we didn't specify on media qualifications.' (Executive Director) For its television work the Tonga Trust relies on the TBC to undertake the technical production of its panel discussions. It outsources its video production to CP.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The current CEDAW Project Coordinator working with the media has trained in media studies and journalism, specialising in film and television production at Auckland University, New Zealand.

The Langafonua Communications Officer has undertaken short-term training both in-country and overseas in radio presentation for women, television presentation and news writing on the environment (SPREP/UNESCO), and in current affairs production (Pacific Media Initiative). She said her training priorities were editing and 'handling the media outlets equipment', but she was generally happy with the skills she had acquired to date.

The President of TANGO said, 'This is an important question because there is a lot of media training that I have heard about, but they all targeted to media organisations and church media. They [do] not [have] access to NGOs information units.'

The TNCC officer responsible for media content has had no media training.

The Tonga Trust would like its officers to have training in Publisher and PageMaker programs so they can produce posters and leaflets.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

CWL has one computer with internet access and no other equipment.

Langafonua has a computer, internet access, a camera, video camera, tape recorder and a recorder to harmonise the voice. Langafonua's fortnightly programs on Radio Tonga are edited and recorded by TBC staff.

TANGO uses a computer, internet access, a photocopier, fax machine, digital camera, scanner but no printer. TANGO does not have its own radio production equipment. It has just acquired a video camera. TANGO says its equipment is inadequate:

Especially having one computer in the office because most of the time the computer is used and we need a printer to be effective in our governance of news and press releases. We use a lot of paper to distribute to our members: having about 170 member group organisations plus 15 individual members. We definitely need a good printer and a good photocopier that would cope with a 100 copies plus. (President)

TNCC has access to one computer, photocopier, a printer and no digital camera or scanner. It said it needs another computer, a digital camera and a mobile phone. The TNCC relies on the TBC and OBN when it needs to produce radio or television programs, and said its equipment is 'not adequate for news production'.

The Tonga Trust has internet access, a video camera, and hand-held tape recorders for interviews, but no radio or television editing capacity.

4.8 NGO media processes

CWL has produced television spots but not broadcast them because they cost TOP25 to air. The Coordinator of the CEDAW project at CWL said:

Every time we do workshops and training we always contact the local media ... because we know it's for free. We use that advantage. We know that at the same time if we want to have a regular media output that we need to get budget put into place by funding to carry that project so that we can afford to pay for our spot on television, afford to run our radio programs and also afford to have columns on newspapers if they charged.

Langafonua pays TOP33 for a 15-minute radio program on the TBC, and TOP200 per 15-minute program on Television Tonga:

Our program is not regular, but when funds are available, or when there's a burning issue that comes up and women need to be informed or any other needs when we look for funding. It is not an easy thing. And then at the end, we did our own fundraising, selling food, if it is a burning issue. But it is very rare to happen. (Communications Officer)

TANGO generally invites the media to cover events as this is free. 'If we have something important to inform the public we use radio and television Tonga and for half an hour it is TOP100.' (President)

TNCC paid TOP10,000 for a website registered under the TCC domain, which it described as expensive. It also purchases radio and television production and broadcast time at the TBC:

We pay for our weekly 15-minutes radio program (TOP33). We have started a monthly talkback show, an hour on both radio and television. That would be three hours of programs per month plus the 15-minute weekly radio program. TBC charges us TOP602 per month. TNCC ran a piano recital night and TBC came to cover and shoot the recitals. We had eight tapes and each tape is two hours. TBC charged TNCC a four-hour tape, already edited TOP700 and the rest TBC charged us TOP900. TBC charged everything, and the use of their camera. (Secretary-General)

The Tonga Trust pays Television Tonga TOP105 per 30-minute program, and receives no concessions.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

There was little interest in community radio or television among the NGOs surveyed. TANGO was the only NGO to express some interest:

It would be great to establish a community radio and television in Tonga. We don't have one at the moment, only radio/television Tonga and they are government owned. If you establish a community radio station and television, one needs qualified staff to run this media business. (President)

The Tonga Trust would prefer to have more regular television and radio programs and a weekly column with the *Talaki* newspaper.

4.10 Funding for media content

CWL has received funds from the AusAID for a Celebrating Women video program, and a number of television spots all produced in 2004. Themes for the spots were: Stop Violence Against Women, Break the Silence, Breast Milk Is the Best Milk for Babies, Promote Your Child's Talent through Education, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Access to Healthy Drinking Water.

British Aid funded the following:

- HIV/AIDS educational video for teenagers, 2004 Commonwealth Vision Awards
- Commonwealth of Freedom television spot, 2003
- Partners in Development television spot, 2002

UNICEF funded the following:

- First Ever Youth Parliament in Tonga 2002 video
- I Remember That Night (HIV/AIDS drama), 2002

Langafonua received UNESCO funding in the 1990s for media content, but has had no donor funding since.

TANGO's newsletter is funded by the Canada Fund from funding TANGO receives for community project activities (5 per cent of these funds) and its membership fees. TANGO has also received funds from the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) and the Pacific Council of Churches (PCC) from Fiji to run programs and for communication.

TNCC has received funds from WACC to promote news production for the TNCC youth desk. The aim of the fund was to produce a youth newsletter and it started well but the funds ran out and the newsletter stopped. TNCC's column in the *Tauma'u Lelei* is free of charge.

Tonga Trust's PASA project is funded by the European Union. The video production for PASA is funded by the UN.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

- *My personal suggestion is that media should allow for NGOs free coverage, I mean, a certain limit. It's for the better of the people. For example, if you give us a column we are not making money out of that. What we're trying to do is tell people we got a service here to help you. You know, you can drop here anytime. I think that media need to put aside a specific policy for NGOs, to say, anything is done is for the greater good of the public. That they have a commitment to carry these out as a community service rather than place a fee on it because a lot of NGOs have good services to provide the people. But then we don't have the money to use the media to do that. (CEDAW Project, CWL)*
- *We need to improve the trust between the two organisations. That's something to establish the trust so we can free flow but it is difficult. (Langafonua)*
- *The association was very positive about the media coverage it had received. Its only suggestion for improvement was that the media follow up community projects that have helped families to make a better life for themselves 'in the family home, the community and the society. (TANGO)*
- *Encourage NGOs to attend any media training workshops available in the country and invite the media to cover TNCC conferences and meetings. NGOs could become members of the Media Council. To improve good governance between the media and TNCC, TNCC needs some funds so it can utilise the local media for TNCC governance. (TNCC)*

The themes that arise from this survey are as follows:

- NGOs are struggling financially to produce media content and are highly reliant on donor funds for this.

- Staff employed have little training in media or in journalism, therefore they do not know how vital their role is to their organisation's capacity to produce news for the media.
- A number of NGO officers who produce media content are paid a low salary and/or are volunteers.
- Some NGOs have no office, such as TANGO, which is using its current President's office and equipment for news production and administration.
- There is a lack of news production equipment available to NGOs.
- No access to free or discounted airtime from TBC radio and television stations. TBC should offer free airtime or discounted time.
- No government financial, training or moral support for NGOs' work and their efforts to promote governance information through the media.
- Internet access is not cheap. Some NGOs have internet access, but it is not available to all information unit staff.
- The standard of reporting in the media has been a concern to some NGOs in the country. Media need to be more effective in their news production when they cover serious issues such as the non-smoking campaign from the Ministry of Health for example.
- NGOs need to be members of the Media Council so that both media and NGOs can talk, learn and appreciate their roles in media advocacy and good governance. Training involving NGOs and the media is also needed.
- NGOs require assistance with human and technical resources so that they can produce more media content. This includes funding for media advocacy.
- The potential for community radio and television, including funding options, should be explored.

¹ Source: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/16092.htm>

² Source: <http://www.worldtravelguide.net/data/ton/ton580.asp>

³ Source: http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/tonga/tonga_brief.html

⁴ All currency in this chapter is in Tongan pa'anga. TOP1.00 equals approximately AU\$0.66.

⁵ Television licence fees were not available.

⁶ See Chapter 2, Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media, for a more detailed analysis of this constitutional amendment and its impact.

⁷ 'Eseta Fusitu'a, 'Balancing Rights of the Public and the Media', Pacific Magazine online, April 2004.

⁸ 'Eseta Fusitu'a, 'Balancing Rights of the Public and the Media', Pacific Magazine online, April 2004.

⁹ Source: *Taione & Others v Kingdom of Tonga*, Summary of Decision.

¹⁰ Vava'u Press is owned by Pesi Fonua and his New Zealand-born wife, Mary. Mary holds 49 per cent equity in the company, but has lived in Tonga for at least 20 years assisting with building up the company, the only local publishing company of its type.

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¹² All the television services in Tonga only reach the main island.

¹³ Distribution to New Zealand has stopped due to lack of payment.

¹⁴ Tongan secondary education is divided into three levels: secondary, upper secondary and higher secondary. The Tonga School Certificate is awarded on completion of five years of secondary education; upper secondary (Form 6) students receive a Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate on completion; and higher secondary (Form 7) students, whose ages range from 18 to 19 years, are awarded a Form 7 Certificate on completion.

¹⁵ Lack of transport is an issue for journalists in other countries as well. This can also limit the capacity of government media and NGO media officers to cover a broader range of stories and issues.

¹⁶ The government has placed ads in *Eva* a complimentary tourist magazine produced by the same company. The ads are from the Tonga Communications Corporation, which is 100 per cent government owned.

¹⁷ This comment reflects the views of a number of government departments in the survey, and highlights their concerns with their lack of media training and production capacity.

¹⁸ See <http://www.planet-tonga.com>. Planet Tonga describes itself as the largest online community for Tongan people. It was not included in the survey as the operators are not based in Tonga.

¹⁹ Funding provided by AusAID.

²⁰ This comment is not unique to Tonga.

²¹ CP is a video production house that specialises in educational video programming. Most of the media content produced by CP is issue based, for example, women's rights, children's rights, promotion of breastfeeding, raising awareness on issues such as domestic violence. It was established in 2002 and provides services in video documentary, television educational spots and informative programs.

TUVALU

BACKGROUND

Tuvalu is a nation made up of nine atolls, with a total land area of approximately 26 sq km. It is located in the central Pacific and has a population of 9651 of which 47.4 per cent live on the main island of Funafuti, where the seat of government is situated. The eight other islands, normally referred to as outer islands, are Nanumea, Nanumaga, Niutao, Nui, Vaitupu, Nukufetau, Nukulaelae and Niulakita. The people are mostly Polynesian and speak a common language, with the exception of Nui, where the people are Micronesians. Tuvalu society is characterised by strong commitments to cultural traditions, Christianity, family and community. Traditional government is important and the community is viewed as a significant entity, one whose wellbeing is paramount to the separate interests of the groups that compose it.

Tuvalu was formerly the Ellice Islands and became independent from the United Kingdom in October 1978, following separation from Kiribati (formerly the Gilbert Islands). It is a constitutional monarchy with the British sovereign as head of state, represented by a governor-general, who must be a Tuvaluan citizen. Its unicameral parliamentary system is based on the Westminster model, with free elections and a Cabinet directly responsible to Parliament. Citizens elect a 15-member Parliament for a term of four years. The Parliament elects the Prime Minister, who selects up to five other Members of Parliament (MPs) to form the cabinet. There are no political parties, although ministers who are not in Cabinet are referred to as the Opposition party. Each island has an elected council, the Kaupule, which has increased powers under the local government legislation passed in 1998, including managing revenue from the outer islands Falekaupule Trust Fund.

In 2002 the Attorney-General said that:

Despite being described in the constitution as a democratic state, Tuvalu lacks the understanding of the principles of democracy and thus good governance. The majority of the population still have a poor understanding of the mechanism and functions of government; a poor understanding of their responsibilities as citizens; a poor understanding of the role of leaders; a poor understanding of the law and the constitution; a poor understanding of the legal system; a poor understanding of their rights; and difficulty in relating to the state. This ignorance is more acute among the rural dwellers that have greater affinity and ties with local customary systems of governance. There is very little effort to educate the people of their rights or to encourage people to participate as development partners. The checking role the people are supposed to play is eroded. Good governance would be improved if principles of good governance are made widely and better known.¹

The survey period in Tuvalu was August to September 2004.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The Prime Minister is responsible for legislation for the national public service broadcaster, the Tuvalu Media Corporation (TMC), which also produces the national newspaper. The Ministry of Works, Communication and Transport oversees telecommunications and commercial radio and television through the Tuvalu Telecommunications Corporation (TTC). The government appoints and chairs the boards of the TMC and TTC.

The main media and communications legislation is the *Tuvalu Media Corporation Act 1999* and *Tuvalu Telecommunication Corporation Act 1993*. There is no licensing for newspapers. The TTC Act covers licensing for commercial radio and television.

Currently the TMC is the only media organisation in Tuvalu.

1.2 Freedom of expression

Freedom of information is guaranteed in the Constitution subject to various factors. Section 11 of the Constitution states that 'every person in Tuvalu is entitled, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs, or sex to the following fundamental rights and freedoms; the right to freedom of expression'. Section 24 (2) expands on this:

(2) *For the purposes of this section, freedom of expression includes:*

- (a) *freedom to hold opinions without interference; and*
- (b) *freedom to receive ideas and information without interference; and*
- (c) *freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference; and*
- (d) *freedom from interference with correspondence.*

Section 24 (3) then states that these freedoms are subject to laws on defence, public safety, public order, public morality and public health; subject to laws protecting the reputations, rights or freedoms of other persons; protecting the privacy of persons concerned in legal proceedings; preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence; or maintaining the authority or independence of the courts; or regulating the administration or the technical operation of posts or telecommunications.

There is no separate freedom of information legislation.

Freedom of the media appears to be guaranteed in the *Media Corporation Act 1999* in section 6 (3); however, in practice this is not the case.²

1.3 Media regulation

The TTC is about to finalise new regulations for the operation and licensing of television in Tuvalu. This includes provisions that specify that all television programs need to be cleared by the minister responsible for television.

The TMC Board operates as the monitor and regulator of the TMC.

1.4 Defamation

Section 184 of the Penal Code defines libel as 'any person who, by print, writing, painting, effigy or by means otherwise than solely by gesture, spoken words or other sounds, unlawfully defames that other person'.

A defamatory matter is 'a matter likely to injure the reputation of any person by exposing him to hatred, contempt or ridicule, or likely to damage any person in his profession or trade by an injury to his reputation' (section 185 Penal Code).

There are no censorship laws applying to broadcasting.

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are no specific local content requirements. However, the *TMC Act* says that the TMC shall:

Provide a national broadcasting service which informs, educates and entertains the people of Tuvalu and, in doing so, reflects its commitment to the interests of Tuvalu.

Section 6(2) The Corporation in performing its principal function, shall:

- (a) *Make all reasonable endeavours to maintain broadcasting services to all regions of all Tuvaluans seeking financial assistance by way of grant or loan from any person if the cost of extension of such services to remote areas renders this expedient or necessary;*
- (b) *Provide adequate coverage of news and information from all parts of Tuvalu and from overseas sources, including the widest possible range of perspective and opinion in its broadcast and publications.*
- (c) *Make its broadcasting facilities available as a means of communication, subject to this Act, if for any reason conventional telecommunications are unavailable;*

- (d) *Maintain a policy of social responsibility by having regard at all times to the interests of the people of Tuvalu and endeavour to accommodate or encourage these when able to do so;*
- (e) *Be accountable to the people of Tuvalu through their elected representative in Parliament.*

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The TMC was established in December 1999. Prior to this the national public broadcasting service, Radio Tuvalu, was part of the government's Broadcasting and Information Division.

The Act clearly states that the TMC is to operate separately from government:

- (3) *It is hereby declared that the Corporation is not to be regarded as the servant or agent of the government ...*
- (4) *Except as otherwise provided by or under this or any other Act, the Corporation and its Board are not subject to direction by or on behalf of the government or any Minister thereof.*

In practice, however, all five Board members are appointed by the Prime Minister, who also selects the chair and deputy chair and may terminate their appointments if the reasons are disclosed. The Secretary to Government chairs the TMC Board. He has an influential role with the media, ensuring that the TMC meets its responsibilities 'in a way that does not create confusion among the public or disturb the peace in the country'. (Secretary to Government)

The TMC's General Manager is appointed by the Board with the Prime Minister's approval. The General Manager's term is three years, but this can be renewed by the Board with the Prime Minister's approval. Permanent employees are appointed (and dismissed) by the Board, which also sets their terms and conditions of employment.

1.7 Government funding for media

In 2000 and 2001 the TMC relied heavily on government grants of AU\$234,750³ and AU\$250,000 respectively to operate. Income tripled in 2001 compared with the previous year, largely due to a rise in income from radio and other sources. However, gains were more than offset by higher operating costs. Wages increased by 49 per cent and telecommunications costs rose significantly. For the last two years the government has provided the TMC with a subsidy of only AU\$97,000. This is 40 per cent of its total operational costs, and is less than half its 2000–01 subsidy.

At present the TMC is operating on an overdraft account from the National Bank of Tuvalu. The government subsidy is paid in four instalments and at the time of the survey (August to October 2004) the last instalment for 2004 was yet to be received. The TMC is trying to earn extra funds but the income generated offsets less than half of the deficit in the TMC budget. The TMC is also obliged by law to submit an annual report, including accounts and financial statements, for the Minister to table in Parliament, but has failed to comply with this requirement.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

As noted, the TMC is the only media organisation in Tuvalu. It is responsible for Radio Tuvalu and the monthly newspaper, the *Tuvalu Echoes*. There was a previous attempt by the TMC to establish a limited television service, which faltered due to a lack of resources. Given its very small, dispersed population, it is unlikely that Tuvalu can support commercial media outlets.

2.2 Program format of radio and television stations

Radio Tuvalu broadcasts a mix of music (Pacific and Western), programs produced by NGOs, government-produced programs, community announcements and news. Programs are in English or Tuvaluan.

2.3 Focus of newspapers

The *Tuvalu Echoes* focuses on a range of community news, with inputs from government and NGOs. This can include stories on the environment, waste management, biodiversity, local development (such as gardening projects and pig farming), lack of medicine, health issues, the national youth policy and the Falekaupule Trust Fund. The newspaper has English and Tuvaluan content.

2.4 Target audience and distribution

Radio Tuvalu targets all age groups in Tuvalu. However, the radio signal does not reach all the islands as the AM transmitter has broken down and the TMC is using FM transmission, which is not very reliable. Radio Tuvalu's content is also largely gathered from the main island, Funafuti. The *Tuvalu Echoes* targets Tuvaluans on all the islands and those living overseas.

2.5 Audience research

One of the journalists recalls the TMC conducting a survey in 2002 in the outer islands to assess the effectiveness of its radio programs, but no details on this survey were available. The General Manager said the TMC has not done audience research as it lacks the appropriate expertise and staff.

2.6 NGO and government access

There is no free airtime for NGOs or government departments on the TMC. However, the *Tuvalu Echoes* does accept articles at no cost. The TMC said its most regular government media producers are the ministries of Health, Environment, Women, Youth, Education, Home Affairs and Agriculture. The regular NGOs are the Tuvalu Christian Church, the Tuvalu Family Health Association, and the Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO). These departments and NGOs come to the station and produce their programs with assistance from station staff.

2.7 Journalism resources

The TMC has five journalists, one of whom is the General Manager. The minimum level of education required for journalism recruits is Year 10, or Form 4. Recruits are also required to be able to speak and write in English and Tuvaluan. The General Manager has a degree in journalism and English (USP); none of the other journalists have formal journalism qualifications.

The General Manager has 11 years journalism experience, while the other journalists have between two and six years experience. On average the journalists stay for seven to eight years before moving on. Some of the reasons given for this were: three were terminated for losing parliamentary recordings, two left to study, one left for health reasons and one for migration.

The pay scale for journalists ranges from AU\$5856 to AU\$7896 per annum. The entry level (Level 9) public service salary for a school leaver is AU\$3000 to AU\$4000 per annum.

It is possible for journalists to study part time at the USP Centre toward a Journalism qualification (electives only, not Journalism subjects) and remain on full salary. However, one journalist had to drop the course because of the cost of the fees and lack of time to concentrate on studies.

Equipment resources

The Chair of the TMC Board said the TMC building 'is in great need of renovation work as paintwork is peeling off, the rooms are too small, soundproof walls are deteriorating'.

The TMC also has a range of equipment problems. It is renting a photocopier from Ricoh Company in Fiji at the rate of AU\$250 a month, which is a problem as its output does not offset the rental fee. The TMC does not have spare equipment to support its current equipment when it breaks down. There are a limited number of recording machines and they produce poor-quality recordings.

The TMC journalists reported, 'We just ended up getting more complaints from the people, which does not help us in our efforts to deliver the work that we are supposed to do.'

There is a need for more computers, a multi-media projector (for use in training), a colour photocopier, a backup for the current public address system, cordless microphones, portable recording machines, a digital video camera, a digital camera and scanners. According to the General Manager this would greatly improve the quality of the products and services that TMC delivers.

The TMC does have internet access but this can be unreliable. The internet is only available on Funafuti.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

Radio Tuvalu produces three news bulletins a day. The TMC does not produce talkback programs of its own. The talkback programs are facilitated and paid for by the Tuvalu National Council

of Women (TNCW), and the departments of Health, Environment and Youth. The station does produce what it describes as basic current affairs programs.

The news seldom includes reports on issues and people in the outer islands. One reason given for this is the cost of telephoning the outer islands for updates. The TMC also has no stringers in the outer islands to provide information on what is happening.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

Radio Tuvalu produces on average 6 to 7 stories per day, and the *Tuvalu Echoes* produces approximately 10 stories per issue.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

The TMC (radio and newspaper) covers governance issues relating to health policies; environmental issues, such as commercial whaling between Japan and Tuvalu; development changes in education, such as entry policy to secondary school and scholarships; and those relating to the government and its relations with countries in the region and internationally. However, the scope of the news covered is usually basic in nature rather than being investigative. This is mainly because TMC journalists have had no training in investigative reporting:

Most of the news coverage that we do is just the general normal news answering the what, where, who, why and how. But we need to produce more than this information and I believe that our role as the media is very important not only in informing our audience but also in educating them on what is really going on. In this way I would see our role as effective in bringing about good governance in our small country. I know that we can do this if only there is some kind of assistance that we can access to provide short-term training for our journalists ... the media in the past had managed to engage one NGO and one civil servant to play these investigative roles in terms of governance issues that concern the government. This is because the NGO person has had the training on good governance and legal system of Tuvalu as well as holding a master's degree in education and the civil servant is a highly educated person in the area of health and holds a high interest in upholding good governance in Tuvalu. Though we have relied on these two to assist us in running governance issues programs for us, we in the media should not rely on this practice because in the long run it does not benefit us.
(General Manager)

The TMC said it had not received any donor or other funding to produce media content on governance issues

2.11 News-gathering techniques

Main news-gathering techniques are interviews with sources and press releases, as well as stories from PACNEWS, Radio Australia, RNZI, the BBC and Agence France-Presse (AFP). The TMC does not have its own website but it has plans for one.

2.12 Media access to government content

Hansard is available and Parliament is broadcast live on Radio Tuvalu. There is also the Internet Service Provider's (ISP) website (www.tuvalu.tv), which includes materials such as the national budget and government press releases. In general however, the media is very dependent on the government releasing information to it. The journalists interviewed expanded on this:

At times we feel that the government officers are reluctant to share information with us and we believe that probably they look at us as unqualified journalists, or that they have something to hide, but we do not really know for sure.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

The main constraints on news production are the level of training of the journalists, limited and poor-quality equipment and the financial constraints that the TMC is facing. Management has finalised a plan to reduce transmission hours. This includes cutting the midday transmission and the evening transmission from four to three hours. It may also have to lay off some staff, including journalists.

2.14 Threats to funding

The TMC has not had funding withdrawn (government or corporate) due to editorial content but, as noted, its annual subsidy from government has been reduced. Government can also delay paying the subsidy, putting the TMC under more financial pressure.

2.15 Industry training

The General Manager and some of the more senior journalists conduct informal training but the TMC has not developed a structured in-house training program for its cadet journalists. The Chair of the TMC Board said there is a 'great need for our journalists to develop professionally' and added:

In terms of improving professional journalism standards in TMC, I highly recommend that both long and short-term trainings need to be provided to our journalists. At the moment it is very difficult for the government to allocate more than one scholarship to TMC as there are only a limited number of scholarships available and every department in the government has to compete for these limited scholarships.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

There is no specific code of ethics and there is no national media association. The TMC journalists interviewed were concerned about their lack of knowledge in this area:

We are the ones that go out and collect the stories from our sources and one of the things that really affects our work is that we do not have adequate knowledge of our right to expression, the freedom of the media to report or to information, the lack of knowledge of our legislation and our human rights in terms of legal understanding. Because we do not have these in place, we always feel inadequate and lack the confidence to conduct our interviews in a more investigative manner.

We feel that in order for us to be more investigative, we need to understand and be trained on good governance, democracy, human rights, freedom of expression and freedom to information, our legislation and the defamation and libel legislation in Tuvalu. This we believe would give us the confidence and a new lease to be more investigative in our reporting.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

There is no industry self-regulation or industry complaints body. As noted earlier, the Board of Directors is responsible for the policy, control and management of the TMC. Any complaints from the public are dealt with by the Board.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

- Government's control over TMC is evident in the presence of the Secretary to Government as the Chair of the Board of Directors, the appointment of the Board of Directors by the minister responsible for the TMC (the Prime Minister), and the TMC's reliance on government funding;
- The government also chairs the TTC and, as such, shapes the decisions of the corporation, which has responsibility for commercial radio and television;
- There is a lack of short- and long-term training opportunities for TMC staff in media skills and journalism.

A TMC-conducted review of the Corporation could strategise ways to improve its weaknesses. Development of a TMC corporate business plan could consider the following:

- TMC to seek a loan from either the Asian Development Bank (ADB) or other donor source to assist its current financial situation;
- Government funding to TMC to increase;
- Government to explore options to privatise the TMC and downsize the staff so it runs more cost effectively;
- The Board of Directors of TMC to include a range of representatives from different sectors appointed by the Public Service Commission;
- The General Manager to be selected by the Board of Directors, and the selection process to be better publicised;
- Establishment of a TMC website to widely publish and disseminate information of national importance;
- Establishment of training opportunities and policy for staff of TMC, including long-term training in journalism and media skills and short-term subjects like good governance, democracy, human rights, freedom of expression, libel and defamation, and media legislation;

- Establishment of a quality-control policy with monitoring and staff appraisals;
- Procurement of adequate and quality equipment for TMC;
- Regular audience research including the outer islands;
- Reestablishment of a television service for Funafuti, with the opportunity for this service to generate income for the TMC.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

There are nine ministries and 35 government departments in Tuvalu, with seven departments participating in the survey: Environment, Health, Education, Women's Affairs, Community Affairs, Youth and Foreign Affairs, as well as the TCC.

There is no central media unit within the government to oversee its media requirements. Each ministry has responsibility for its own media content and production, which must be cleared by the minister or permanent secretary concerned. The government's General Administrative Orders stipulate that all government press releases need to be approved and cleared by the Secretary to Government. However, it appears that it is not always necessary for departments to follow this policy before releasing information to the media.

Human resources

The Secretary to Government is the media spokesperson for the Office of the Prime Minister and, as noted, also the Chair of the TMC Board.

Each ministry usually nominates the permanent secretary or a head of department under the minister's portfolio as its media officer. All media relations are to be cleared by the minister concerned before they are made known to the public.

None of the government departments have a full-time media officer or media unit. In the Health Department, three senior staff — the Director of Health, the Director of Public Health and the Health Superintendent at Princess Margaret Hospital — are involved in the production of press releases and radio programs. In addition to this, officers in different divisions of public health take responsibility for content in their areas, such as water, sanitation and nutrition. Once the media content is prepared the officer responsible has to submit the program to the Director of Health for editing and checking and then forward this to the Secretary to Government for approval.

Each unit in the Department of Environment is responsible for the production of media content, depending on the topic and the officer's area of expertise. Once the radio programs are prepared they are submitted to the Director to check and edit. The Department is trying to establish an information unit but is facing problems due to lack of staff, equipment and resources.

The Department of Women's Affairs has a research and information officer, and as part of her work, she produces the department's media content (radio programs and a newsletter).

The Department of Youth has one person who performs some media duties, as does the Department of Community Affairs.

Department of Education programs are prerecorded by teachers from schools in the outer islands, and it is the curriculum officer's responsibility to ensure that the programs are cleared by the Director of Education before they are forwarded to the TMC for transmission.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has one officer who performs some media duties.

The TTC's Corporate Services Manager produces its radio programs as part of his duties.

3.2 Government media processes

There are no centrally established processes for briefing the media. Each ministry can issue press releases and produce radio programs for the TMC.

As noted, the TMC is the only media outlet and it is subsidised by government. As such it acts like a quasi-government media unit for all government ministries, broadcasting and/or printing material sent to it by government. The Opposition member interviewed for the survey was critical of the government and the TMC for not providing opportunities for alternative political viewpoints:

I feel frustrated with our media because they have legislation that clearly spells out their independence and yet they cannot stand on their own feet and make decisions for themselves. They would always have to refer everything to the office of the Prime Minister for final approval. I do not blame the government trying to take advantage of TMC weakness. TMC definitely needs a strong management team to allow TMC to deliver its responsibilities as stipulated in its legislation.

The government is constructing a website. As noted earlier, currently www.tuvalu.tv publicises some speeches, press releases, and public opinion and comment.

Parliament is broadcast live on the TMC when it is sitting and Hansard is readily available. However, not everyone knows that Hansard exists and can be accessed.

3.3 Government department media content

Women's Affairs produces a monthly publication called *TUFATALA* and a monthly radio program on Radio Tuvalu. The programs focus on the department's development work as well as gender awareness. The newsletter attempts to inform women about development work for women by government. The need to identify the enhancement of women's participation in economic development is one of the department's areas of special emphasis. The Director said the focus on women is justified as women are major contributors to economic growth.

Environment produces mostly radio programs. There are five units that deal with five separate environment programs and these units take turns in producing the monthly media program for Radio Tuvalu. The department used to produce a newsletter funded by the Pacific Islands Climate Change Program (PICCAP), a regional project, but when the project ended in 2003 so did the newsletter. The department also runs short radio spots on waste management funded by the waste management project (AusAID). All the media content, whether radio programs or news releases, must be cleared by the Secretary to Government.

Health mainly produces weekly radio programs focusing on areas that are crucial to the improvement of the community's health. For example HIV/AIDS, diabetes, high blood pressure, tuberculosis, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The programs are funded by the Ministry of Health from its recurrent budget. The HIV/AIDS media programs are funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The department also produces media programs for World Tobacco Day and Safe Roads, funded by project funds. These programs are produced once or twice a year. It would like to produce a regular newsletter, but lacks the funds.

Youth produces fortnightly radio programs on the government's youth policy and the importance of involving youth in the decision-making process. The department also produces articles in the *Tuvalu Echoes* on youth policy development. It is considering a youth newsletter but is waiting on funds from the UNDP. All the media programs are cleared by the Secretary for Home Affairs before they are prerecorded.

Community Affairs has no allocation in its recurrent budget for any media programs from the department. The department is waiting on funds from the UNDP for 12 video productions, 15 radio programs, 16 print productions, including posters and pamphlets and media workshops. This funding may also cover the appointment of another media officer to assist with this work.

Education produces school radio programs prerecorded from all schools and funded by the Tuvalu Australian Associated School Project (TAESP). The Senior Education Officer said the department used to produce radio programs for teachers' professional development but it ran out of funds for this. In relation to matters of educational policy, he added that it is not part of the department's 'normal work to inform the public about educational developments and policies', unless the media requires them to clarify an issue or there is a public issue relating to education.

Foreign Affairs employs a Foreign Affairs Officer (FAO) who normally uses press releases (five to six annually) to disseminate information through the TMC. These press releases are cleared by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. In terms of informing the general public about international and regional agreements that government has entered into, the FAO said, 'Ever since I came into this department, the department has not ever played this role in translating conventions and agreements that our government has signed to the public. I feel that this role needs to be made effective.' Foreign Affairs also does not have a website to publish this information.

The TTC produces a radio program which provides information on changes to its services, and invites public feedback.

The majority of government radio programs are produced in Tuvaluan, with some English language material for radio and print.

3.4 Media governance priorities

The priority governance issues communicated by government via the media are parliamentary government and democracy, health issues, education, human rights, criminal justice, national security and the environment.

The leader of the Opposition said governance priorities should be ‘issues of national interest and especially what the government is doing’. He added:

It is the responsibility of the Opposition Party to play this checking role so that the government would always to be cautious in its dealings. But unfortunately we cannot do this through the radio as the government does not allow us the opportunity.

3.5 Target audiences

The target audiences are women (Women’s Affairs and Health); the general public (Health); youth 15 to 49 years (Youth); outer island communities (Community Affairs); and children, teachers and parents (Education).

3.6 Qualifications and training

The Department of Women’s Affairs said its research and information officer required basic knowledge, good English writing skills and the ability to report fairly and in a balanced way, and to use Publisher and PageMaker programs and digital editing. The current officer has work experience as a journalist and has completed part of a degree in journalism at USP.

For Health, the most important thing is that the officers are qualified in the relevant health area to produce the program. Media production skills are then expected to be learned on the job. The officers producing media content normally do not have any media qualifications.

The Department of Community Affairs requires a degree in any field and some work experience. The officer producing media content at the Department of Youth has no media skills.

In Foreign Affairs the FAO is an experienced journalist having previously worked at the TMC. She has also completed a diploma in journalism (USP).

Staff working on media production in the majority of departments surveyed, had received no on-the-job media training. The exceptions are the officer in the Department of Women’s Affairs, who has received training in print media, online services, radio and television presentation, and scriptwriting, and the Department of Community Affairs officer, who undertook a three-month training attachment in video production at the SPC in Noumea in 2004. This was part of the Social Development Policy funded by the UNDP.

There was no record of any media training for the Prime Minister, his senior ministers or other parliamentarians.

The government officers interviewed listed a number of media training priorities.

Women’s Affairs: Training in how to report responsibly, fairly and accurately for print media and online reporting, training in lively radio presentation, television presentation and scriptwriting. The Director would like media training in interview preparation, preparing and writing press releases and preparing for press conferences.

Environment: Training in press conferences, interviews and other relevant media skills for all officers involved in media production.

Health: Training to produce fair and balanced comments on issues that are crucial to the security of the community, and in gathering complete information. Basic training in all areas of media production, from producing radio programs, attending press interviews, writing press releases, attending press conferences, producing newsletters, pamphlets, leaflets and posters to producing health documentaries.

Youth: Preparing media programs of interest to the public, interviews, press conferences, talkback shows and other media skills.

Community Affairs: Journalism skills, writing press releases and producing radio programs and other relevant media skills that could enhance the quality of its media programs.

Foreign Affairs: Preparing for press conferences, writing press releases and media interview skills.

3.7 Equipment

All the government departments surveyed have access to computers and the internet. They can communicate with the outer islands by telephone when the need arises but may not have the funds to do this regularly. They do not have tape recorders or other production equipment and use the TMC studio to prerecord their radio programs.

3.8 Government–media relationships

The Secretary to Government summed this up when he said the TMC is ‘100 per cent owned by the people, and their government should have a good and close working relationship with it’.

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

- At the departmental level there has been little if any training for government officers in media skills and the importance of using the media to disseminate information to the public;
- There is an absence of understanding on human rights and the right of the public to be informed about what government departments are doing in terms of using public funds;
- There is a lack of budgetary allocation to government departments for the production of media programs;
- Departments that are able to produce media programs receive financial assistance from donors overseas;
- There is also a lack of quality equipment in departments for the production of media content.

When asked about improvements to the working partnership of government and the media, the parliamentarians and the Secretary to Government made the following range of suggestions:

Media to be fully independent and quality of media staff improved. The original idea when the Tuvalu Media Corporation was formed was to grant the TMC the independence and freedom to deliver its tasks without government interference. Up to now the reality is that the TMC has been very much controlled by the government since its establishment. (Parliamentary Speaker)

The media should report the correct information for the public. (Minister of Natural Resources)

Freedom of the media depending on media personnel’s capability and qualifications to be able to report responsibly, accurately, and fair and balanced reporting. (Minister for Local Government, Rural Development, Women and Community Affairs)

I believe that the Tuvalu Media Corporation has a lot of potential to produce good quality governance issues from the government out to the public; however, I do not see that happening very much from the media and this is partly I believe to do with the lack of exposure and capacity of our journalists to extract from government officials the best information related to governance issues. (Secretary to Government)

The Leader of the Opposition observed that:

- The TMC should take advantage of the Opposition party and seek its views in regard to national issues;
- Training should be conducted for MPs so that they know how to work with the media more effectively;
- Board directors for the TMC should be selected by members of the public and appointed by the Prime Minister and should constitute a fair representation of society.

Other strategies could include:

- Conducting basic media awareness training for heads of department as well as their information or media officers;
- Establishing budget allocations for media content in each government department;
- Procuring proper equipment for each department to improve the quality of departments’ media content;
- Conducting media training for government media officers and information officers in how to put out press releases, how to prepare for press conferences, the production of radio programs, talkback shows, panel discussions and debates on development and governance issues.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

There are 36 registered NGOs under the Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO). At the moment there is no legal framework for the establishment of NGOs, and TANGO is pursuing this. Of the 36 NGOs, four produce regular media content and another five NGOs produce occasional content.

The four NGOs are: TANGO, the Tuvalu Christian Church (TCC), which is made up of 13 Christian churches in Tuvalu and one belonging to the Tuvalu community in New Zealand, the Tuvalu Family Health Association (TuFHA), and the Tuvalu National Council of Women (TNCW).

4.2 NGO media content on governance issues

The TNCW produces a weekly radio program, monthly press releases and a quarterly newsletter (50–70 copies depending on the demand from the general public and funds available) and pamphlets. This is produced by the Legal Rights Training Officer, previously funded by the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) based in Fiji and now funded by NZAID. The content of the radio programs includes the following subjects: basic family law information; domestic violence laws; gender issues; democracy; good governance in the home and family, in the family clan, in the organisation and in the community; and responsible leadership, with a focus on those in leadership positions in government, placing great emphasis on accountability and transparency. The radio programs have also included talkback on political issues. The newsletter contains news on the Legal Rights Training Project activities, and some governance issues related to government, such as the discriminatory government policy of terminating government scholarships for female students once they get pregnant.

TCC produces weekly radio programs on biblical teaching and a monthly newsletter. Churches such as Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu (EKT), Assembly of God and Seventh Day Adventists produce radio content and newsletters.

TANGO has a monthly newsletter (50–80 copies depending on funding), and monthly press releases on its project developments and initiatives.

TuFHA runs a weekly radio health program, as well as drama on communicable diseases and other health-related issues, such as smoking and family planning. TuFHA also produces pamphlets on HIV/AIDS and other related health issues.

Occasional NGO media producers include Island Care (programs on environmental health hazards such as persistent organic pollutants and climate and sea-level change); the Tuvalu Overseas Seamen's Union (TOSU), which uses radio for its Alcohol and Drug Abuse Project; and the Tuvalu National Youth Council (TNYC), which promotes responsible youth through talkback programs. Outer island NGOs also use media (when they can afford to) to announce their programs and activities.

The languages used for the NGO media content are mainly Tuvaluan for radio and Tuvaluan and English for print.

Governance priorities in the NGO programs include: human rights, democracy, good governance, land rights, women's rights, discriminatory laws and policies, family laws, international conventions, women in development issues, HIV/AIDS and individual organisations' development projects.

The TNCW is the main NGO producing media governance content. The Legal Rights Training Officer said:

At the moment it looks like only the TNCW through the Legal Rights Training Project is looking at governance issues and challenging government to make changes to existing discriminatory policies and programs. There is a great need for other NGOs, such as TANGO, to produce such programs and support this checking role of NGOs. I believe also the media needs to be gender sensitised and trained on basic legal literacy and human rights, the law of defamation and libel and the importance of CSOs [civil society organisations] to access the media to inform the general public about these issues.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

Target audiences include women (TNCW), NGOs and government (TANGO), church members (TCC), youth (TNYC) and the general public (TuFHA). Most of the audience feedback is informal. TNCW officers get regular feedback from friends, families and work colleagues, both in the government and in the NGO community. At times people ring up and others stop the Legal Rights Training Officer in the street and tell her what they think about her programs:

At first, people felt that what I was doing was not traditional and cultural and especially not a precondition role for a traditional Tuvaluan woman. Questioning authority is not a part of a Tuvaluan culture and as such there was a mixed feeling found in the people's responses. Some like it, as it is new, and [are] thankful that now they understand what is going on, while others feel that it is not my place to question authority and challenge government. They believe that we elected our leaders because they know better, so leave them alone to do what they are doing as they sure do know what they are doing.

The officer carried out an audience survey in late 2002 to find out how the general public is responding to the media programs. She said overall the views were positive. 'Only a few were not agreeable and suggested that I leave the leaders alone. Others suggested changing the running time from 8.30 to 8.00 pm so that they can listen to it before they play bingo at 9.00 pm.'

4.4 NGO media capacity

The Legal Rights Training Officer of the TNCW usually works on media programs three out of five days a week. This includes researching the topic, talking to the relevant people, getting other people's views and compiling the script, proofreading and then choosing the best people to edit the content of the script. The length of time of the work depends on the topic and whether it is to be delivered in a lecture format, as a panel discussion, debate or talkback.

The TCC does not have a specific media officer working on the church's media programs. Responsibility for the research and writing of articles, scriptures and radio programs is shared among the pastors working in the head office.

Both TANGO and TuFHA each have one officer, who spends a portion of their time on media production, TANGO for one day a week and TuFHA for two to three days on average. Duties involve compiling and producing a newsletter for editing, news releases, advertisements and announcements, and producing brochures and pamphlets.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

Two of the NGO officers (TCC and TuFHA) have had experience as working journalists. The other two officers (TNCW and TANGO) had no prior media experience. The Coordinator of TANGO said, 'As long you can write clearly in English and Tuvaluan, anybody can produce media content programs. It is not necessary to have a qualification so as to enable yourself produce media content programs.'

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The NGO officers have attended short media training workshops. The Legal Rights Training Officer (TNCW) has undertaken training in pamphlet and newsletter production using Publisher and PageMaker programs, how to attend and conduct a press conference, researching a legal issue, popular education using theatre play, and training in preparing for debates on human rights issues.

The TCC officers have received training in producing radio programs, news writing and journalism. The officer at TuFHA has trained with the Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group in Vanuatu, and undertaken basic training in management and developing programs for youth, and previously worked at the TMC.

Training priorities suggested were: skills in journalism, investigative journalism, desktop publishing, editorial management, and producing radio programs and documentaries.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

Each NGO has one or more computers, internet access and a printer. In addition to this the TNCW has a digital camera and scanner and TuFHA has a public address system, video deck and screen. They all rely on the TMC for radio production. Most said their equipment was adequate, but two felt their equipment limited their media output.

4.8 NGO media processes

The TMC charges NGOs AU\$50 to air a 30-minute radio program, and then AU\$2.50 per extra minute. Public announcements are charged by the number of words and the current rate is AU\$4.00 for 80 words and AU\$0.10 for every word thereafter.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

TCC and EKT are both interested in exploring the feasibility of establishing a community radio station. TuFHA's Executive Director said, 'There is a need for a radio station for the organisation so as to enable us [to] reach our youths during most hours of the day with our health issues. However, we are also mindful of the cost of establishing one.'

4.10 Funding for media content

As noted, the Legal Rights Training Project based at the TNCW used to be funded by the RRRT. But as of October 2004 it will be funded by NZAID.

TANGO received funds from the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI) Regional Disaster Management Project to produce a local disaster preparedness video as a training tool.

TuFHA was funded by an SPC regional project to produce a video on sexually transmitted infections for adolescents. TuFHA has also received assistance from donors such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNDP, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Canada Fund, as well as an annual grant of AU\$10,000 from the Tuvalu government and financial assistance from the Global Fund.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

The following issues are hindering the effective usage of the media by the civil society organisations:

- Lack of resources for smaller NGOs to enable them to produce media content;
- Lack of financial assistance, especially from the government, to assist women's organisations to use the media to promote their organisations and issues of national importance;
- Lack of training conducted in-country for the NGOs on media awareness and how to use the media.

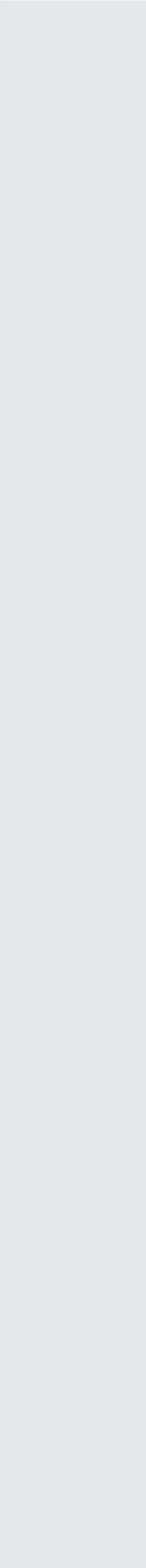
Suggestions on how to improve NGO media capacity included:

- Government to establish a legal framework for the establishment of NGOs;
- Government to establish a standard budgetary allocation to smaller NGOs for the production of their media content;
- Training workshops for NGOs on the important role the media plays in good governance and human rights, and how to best utilise the media for these purposes;
- Basic training on media skills for NGO media producers on defamation and libel, TMC legislation, production of radio programs, newsletters, talkback programs, debates and panel discussions;
- Procurement of proper equipment to assist NGOs to produce media content;
- Explore setting up a central production centre (audiovisual and print) that NGOs can access.

¹ From a presentation by Attorney-General Mr Italeli Taeaia at a Good Governance Workshop hosted by the Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations in 2002.

² See Section 7 Public service broadcasting for details.

³ All currency referred to in this chapter is in Australian dollars.



VANUATU

BACKGROUND

Vanuatu is a democratic republic of 83 islands located in the South-West Pacific, with a population of around 200,000. The people of Vanuatu, which means 'Land Eternal', are predominantly Melanesian. The Ni-Vanuatu have populated these islands for centuries and, with more than 115 distinctly different cultures and languages still thriving here, Vanuatu is recognised as one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. There are also small communities of French, British, Australian, New Zealand, Vietnamese, Chinese and other Pacific Island people. Until 1980 Vanuatu, then known as the New Hebrides, was jointly administered by France and Great Britain as a 'Condominium'. Vanuatu gained its independence in 1980.¹

At Independence there were two parties based mainly on language and religion, a French-speaking generally Catholic party and an English-speaking mainly Anglican and Presbyterian party. Since then political parties have split and multiplied.

Vanuatu has a 52-member Parliament elected by the people every four years. The executive consists of a Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister, who is elected by Parliament from among its members. The President is also elected by Parliament and the National Council of Chiefs for a period of five years. The Prime Minister and the 12 co-members of the Council of Ministers oversee the administration of Vanuatu's 13 government ministries.

Vanuatu has a small, fragile economy, has Least Developed Country status and is highly dependent on the support of aid donors. While it is generally more stable than its neighbours the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, significant instability indicators have been evident in recent times.²

The survey was conducted from August to September 2004 when the Serge Vohor government was establishing itself. In December 2004 the government lost power after a no confidence vote, and the new Prime Minister is Ham Lini.

1. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Media and communications legislation

The government does not have a department of information, communications or media. Media legislation and regulation is the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Department. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities oversees telecommunications.

The main legislation is the *Broadcasting and Television Act No. 3 of 1992*, modified by Amendments No. 13 of 2000 and No. 11 of 2003. This legislation is referred to as the *VBTC Act* as it creates the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC) for the purpose of carrying on the services of broadcasting and television in Vanuatu. It also covers licensing for commercial media.

While the Minister, in this instance the Prime Minister, is responsible for issuing and revoking licences, it would appear that some of this responsibility has been delegated to the VBTC. In addition to 'providing television and sound broadcasting services within Vanuatu, for disseminating information, education and entertainment' as per section 10(a) in the *Broadcasting and Television Act*, the rest of section 10 states that functions of the Corporation shall be:

- (b) To secure proper standards of television and sound broadcasting with regard to both programme content and technical performance and broadcasts;
- (c) To exercise licensing and regulatory functions in respect of the sale and use of television receivers and broadcasting receiving apparatus;
- (d) To act internationally as the national authority or representative of Vanuatu in respect of matters relating to broadcasting;
- (e) To advise the Minister in respect of matters relating to broadcasting.

As a result, the VBTC, in addition to being the national public service broadcaster, also has responsibility for regulating radio and television. This is very unusual and potentially puts the VBTC in a position of conflict of interest, as it makes recommendations on licences for possible competitors.

Newspapers need a business licence to operate, under the *Business Licence Act No. 19 of 1998* Schedule 1 and Amendments No. 50 of 2000 and No. 29 of 2001. The business of printing a newspaper is covered by category I.4 (Public Services Enterprises) and requires the granting of a business licence and a fee of Vt100,000 (approximately AU\$1190). One newspaper, the *Independent*, pays Vt121,112 per year. The same licence fees apply to any new radio or television station.

1.2 Freedom of expression, the press and the right to information

The right of freedom of expression is guaranteed under the Constitution but there is no guarantee for freedom of the press or the right to information. There is also no separate freedom of information legislation.

1.3 Media regulation

Governance, as well as media freedom and freedom of expression, was not a priority at Independence and corruption was not talked about. The deportation of an Australian journalist in the early 1980s by Father Walter Lini's government sent a signal to the media to be quiet and not to challenge the government. For many years there were no private media organisations, only the government newspaper and radio station.

Even when privately owned newspapers began operating in the country, investigative journalism in the sense that it is known in developed countries was not very evident among the journalists. It also has not been uncommon for government staff or even ministers themselves to go into the newspaper offices to criticise journalists if they feel affronted by a particular article.

During the early 1990s, when the Union of Moderate Party took over after 11 years of rule under the Anglophone Vanuatu party, tighter control was put on the media, especially the government media.

When the first Ombudsman was appointed in 1994, her reports were published in full in the newspapers, detailing many problems with corruption among politicians. The regular production of the reports assisted the media to report on these matters, as they were able to use the constitutional rights of the Ombudsman to publish the reports from that office.

With the exception of a Christian radio station licence, there have been no other independent licences issued in Vanuatu, and 'there is the perception that government is unwilling to issue licences'. There is also 'the perception that licences could be revoked for little reason, making it too risky to invest in broadcasting in Vanuatu'.³

There is legislation restricting the ownership of newspapers to Vanuatu citizens. *The Newspapers Act [CAP 156], Act 30 of 1982* was enacted on 25 April 1983 and was never repealed. It is a short piece of legislation that prohibits a non-citizen from owning or publishing a newspaper in Vanuatu, except if they first obtain the approval of the minister responsible for newspaper publications. In reality this law has never been used, as some newspapers have been, and are, owned by non-citizens. It was originally enacted when the former Prime Minister Walter Lini expelled an Australian journalist, referred to above, just after Independence.

1.4 Defamation

Apart from inheriting the English *Defamation Act 1952* at Independence, defamation legislation as such does not exist in Vanuatu and common law applies. This can be Australian or English common law, and truth is an absolute defence. There has only been one defamation decision since

1980. The *Daily Post* said it is aware of defamation and is very careful what it prints. It also has a policy of apologising for any mistakes.

There are no censorship laws, but there can be censorship through political interference from either the members of the VBTC Board or the Office of the Prime Minister, the minister responsible for the VBTC.⁵ However, it has been noted that threats of violence and other forms of disruption have persuaded some parts of the media to self-censor their stories, 'even in the absence of legal grounds for censorship'.⁶

1.5 Local content and community service requirements

There are no requirements for licensees to have any local content. There is one private radio station and one private television station operated by Trinity Broadcasting. For VBTC radio and television there is a requirement to produce news programs that could be considered as local programs. Section 11 (2) (d) states that the Corporation must ensure:

That a sufficient amount of time is given to news, news features and current affairs and to ensure that all news, in whatever form, is presented with the accuracy and impartiality and with due regard to the public interest.

There are no community service requirements for radio or television. The only legislative requirement is to follow government policy.

1.6 Public service broadcasting

The VBTC was corporatised in 1993. Prior to this, Radio Vanuatu and the *Vanuatu Weekly* were part of a government department. The *Vanuatu Weekly* ceased in 2001.

When the VBTC became a corporation in 1993 Radio Vanuatu was created to generate revenue, and TBV was introduced, with the assistance of the French government.

The functions and duty of the VBTC as listed in section 10 (2) of the Act are:

- (a) *To provide adequate and comprehensive programmes with a view to serving the best interests of the general public;*
- (b) *To develop television and sound broadcasting services to the best advantage and interest of the country subject to such directions as the Minister from time to time lay down;*
- (c) *To ensure that nothing in the programmes broadcast by the Corporation which offends against good taste or decency; or is likely to incite crime or lead to disorder; or offends any racial group or may promote ill will between difference races or different groups of people; offends the followers of any religious faith or order; or may outrage public feelings in general; and*
- (d) *That sufficient amount of time is given to news, news features and current affairs and to ensure that all news, in whatever form, is present with due accuracy and impartiality and with due regard to the public interest.*

The *VBTC Act* created an independent body corporate with a board composed of five to seven members. The legislation allows the VBTC to operate separately from government within certain limits, but the Minister has the right to intervene directly to influence the VBTC with some limitations that are not respected if the Prime Minister wishes to control the VBTC.

The VBTC has to comply with government policy with respect to broadcasting (section 35 of the *VBTC Act*). The Prime Minister can give general or special directions in writing on the performance of duties and the exercise of the powers of the VBTC. There is a requirement for the VBTC to comply with the directions given.

There are limitations to the powers of the Prime Minister. He cannot influence a particular program, or the gathering or presentation of news, or the preparation or presentation of current affairs programs, or the contracts for the provision of programs.

The General Manager is appointed by the Minister, as per section 12 of the Act:

The Corporation must with the approval of the Minister appoint as General Manager a competent and qualified person experienced in the field of management and, if possible, broadcasting, finance, law or journalism.

The Corporation has the power to appoint other staff members independent of the Prime Minister (section 13 of the Act).

The board members are appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers from persons appearing to him to be qualified by reason of experience in broadcasting, television, engineering (especially telecommunications, electronics or computer technology), journalism, public relations, communications or other related subjects.

The Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed by the Minister from the members of the Corporation under section 3 (2) of the Act. The members can only be removed by the Minister under strict, specific standard conditions:

The Minister may remove the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and any member of the Corporation if he or she:

- (a) Is incapacitated by physical and mental illness; or*
- (b) Has performed unsatisfactorily for a significant period of time; or*
- (c) Is convicted of an offence involving dishonesty or fraud; or*
- (d) Is absent from four consecutive meetings of the Corporation unless the members is excused by the Corporation for having been absent from those meetings; or*
- (e) Becomes bankrupt; or*
- (f) Is otherwise unfit or unable to discharge the functions of a member.*

In August 2004 the Vohor government dismissed the VBTC Board allegedly without any valid reason, and the Prime Minister's Public Relations Officer (PRO) was reportedly instructing the VBTC on content during this period.⁷ There was also some discussion about the VBTC reverting to a government department. This is not the first government that has attempted to control the VBTC politically and prevent the expression of points of views. According to the former Chair of VBTC, this type of intervention was frequent under Prime Minister Maxine Korman and his Private Secretary 1991–97. The government used to control everyday programs broadcast on the radio. This level of control stopped for a few years and was reestablished under the prime ministership of Serge Vohor in 2004.

The VBTC is currently faced with a range of problems:

- Breakdown of the transmission system in the islands resulting in less than 40 per cent of the population being served;
- Obsolete equipment;
- A huge debt estimated to equal the annual subsidy from the government;
- Labour disputes with the staff;
- No more access to telephone or internet because of shortage of money;
- Costly defamation suits;
- Regular changing of the board with each change of government, the last one having occurred in August 2004, only four months after the board was appointed for three years.

When the most recent Board commenced its duties earlier in 2004 it found that there was no financial report. The Board and the new General Manager initiated work on this, with the result that the VBTC debts are estimated to be in excess of Vt8m.⁸

1.7 Government funding for media

Government funding to the VBTC consists of an annual grant of Vt45,000,000 to cover administration costs only. The VBTC has to generate revenue to cover the journalists' salaries. Additional VBTC income for 1999–2000 was Vt1m per month, reaching Vt5m per month some time after this. More recent figures were not provided.

2. MEDIA SECTOR

2.1 Media outlets

Radio and television

- The public service broadcaster, the VBTC, operates Radio Vanuatu, a commercial music station Nambawan 98 FM and Television Blong Vanuatu (TBV). The VBTC is a government-owned corporation.

- Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) Television and Radio is an American-owned Christian radio and television station broadcasting religious programming via satellite.
- Radio 90 Laef FM is a Christian radio station operated by United Christian Broadcasters (UCB) Pacific Partners and Abundant Life Ministries, a local Christian Ministry.
- CReST FM, or Tafea Toktok Haus FM 104, is a community radio station in Tanna in the Tafea Province. It is funded by UNICEF under the Child Friendly School (elementary and primary schools) project and is also receiving assistance from the Tafea Provincial Education Office. It is expected to be self-sufficient after 12 months.⁹

Newspapers

- The *Independent* is published weekly in English, French and Bislama, the three main languages. One thousand copies are printed each issue. The *Independent* is a charitable organisation, and it is registered as the Independent Foundation Inc. Originally it was a private weekly paper called the *Port Vila Presse*. A group of businesspeople were concerned about the likely closure of the *Port Vila Presse* as there was only one other newspaper. They decided to rescue the *Port Vila Presse* but they wanted to do something different — to be an alternative to inform the people on matters close to them. They created a foundation. The founding members put in Vt1m each and do not expect to make any money. Any profits will be returned to the newspaper, rather than to the shareholders, who prefer to remain anonymous. The paper has a Board, consisting of five members.
- The *Daily Post* is published daily, Tuesday to Saturday, in English and Bislama and is available online in English and Bislama. Daily distribution from Tuesdays to Fridays is 2200 copies, and the Saturday print run is 3000 copies. The newspaper is owned by a limited company registered in Vanuatu, Kilawee Holdings Ltd, and Botanical Garden Ltd, a company owned by the paper's Editor, Marc Neil Jones. The *Daily Post* also has an online new service, but it not updated daily.
- *ni-Vanuatu* is a new weekly paper planning to print 2500 copies and give 200 free to schools. It is also planning to launch an online news website. The newspaper is owned and run by its Editor, Moses Stephens. It remains to be seen whether the relatively small media market in Vanuatu can support a third newspaper.

Online news services

- Port Vila Presse Online (<http://www.news.vu/en>) is an online service operated by Marke Lowen, the former publisher of the *Port Vila Presse*. The online news service operates as a news portal publishing news sent by the *Daily Post* and the *ni-Vanuatu*, along with stories from other media in the region and overseas of relevance to Vanuatu. It is updated daily and has up to two million hits per month.

2.2 Radio and television program formats

Radio Vanuatu's format consists of news (local news and news from Radio Australia, the BBC and Radio France International news), talkback, magazine programs, sports, short stories, a small number of talks programs produced by government and NGOs, weather and shipping information, religious programs and music. Locally produced programs are mainly in Bislama, but some are in English and French. The VBTC's commercial station, 98 FM, broadcasts music with some news.

Currently TBV is screening CCTV from Beijing for 24 hours per day. Initially it was an offer by the Chinese government to the Vanuatu government and VBTC. The VBTC is interested because CCTV is a free-to-air station in English and the content is educational, cultural, informative and entertaining. TVB is also trialling television programs from Radio France Outré-Mer (RFO) Tempo. 'We are supposed to get these services until we get funding from the French government to digitalise the whole of VBTC. The French agency who will help us would provide 42 million vatu in three phases.' (General Manager)

At the time of the survey the only local content on TVB was news and advertisements from 7 pm to 7.30 pm.

CreST FM is primarily a talk station and does not allow music programs unless they are documentary style. No foreign music, politics or religion is broadcast. The content is mainly educational programs on agriculture, police awareness, custom stories, education, health, religious and social programs. CReST promotes the use of vernacular languages and the three official languages, Bislama, English and French.

2.3

Focus of newspapers

The focus of the *Independent* is essentially current affairs. As a weekly review newspaper, it reflects on the events of the week. The priority is local news. The paper also maintains the French language that was part of its predecessor, the *Port Vila Presse*. The objectives in its constitution are:

- (a) *Publishing of news of all types in a balanced, professional manner;*
- (b) *Strengthening public awareness of current issues;*
- (c) *Fostering public participation in the democratic process;*
- (d) *Identifying ways to balance the participation in the decision making process between men and women;*
- (e) *Supporting the role of watchdog agencies;*
- (f) *Championing accountability, transparency and the effectiveness of the judicial process;*
- (g) *Taking an active role in civil society.*

The *Daily Post's* priority is local news but it also has regional and international news and international sports. The newspaper has established contacts with the provincial headquarters and gets news from them. There is also a branch of the *Daily Post* in the northern town of Luganville, Santo. Its news is mainly gathered from the two towns, Port Vila and Luganville.

The ni-Vanuatu aims to report positively on the 'real Vanuatu and its people', and its focus is on development news. The Editor said:

My objective is to portray a positive reporting to protect the integrity of the country, Vanuatu and the people. I think a lot of negative reporting has created a negative impact on the country and my objective is to try and correct what has been done. I welcome news that will develop the people rather than news that will destroy them. Sometimes we have to look at things in our own Melanesian point of view and not from the views that are foreign as this does not suit our custom and cultures.

2.4

Target audience and distribution

The VBTC targets the entire population of Vanuatu. At the moment Radio Vanuatu's shortwave service can be heard in the morning and evening, but stops operating around lunchtime.¹⁰ The medium wave transmission frequency 1125KZ only covers a short distance. It appears that most islands do not receive any radio or only receive it very poorly. 98FM reaches two towns, Port Vila on the island of Efate and Luganville on the island of Santo. TBV's range is limited to 20 km, reaching Port Vila and Luganville. There has not been a survey done to confirm this, but the estimate is that television only reaches 20 per cent of the population.

In December 2004 the VBTC announced that it had instituted a three-phase plan to improve transmission. In phase one Radio Australia will provide financial and technical support to repair and upgrade the shortwave and medium wave transmitters. Phase two involves the purchase of new shortwave, medium wave and FM transmitters, and the third phase, is fully digitising TBV.¹¹

CRest broadcasts via two transmitters to most of Tanna Island and Aniwa Island. It is planning to have transmitters on Futuna, Annuity and Erromango within five years. It is expected to reach up to 10,000 people. Initially the station will broadcast from 4 pm to 8 pm every day.

The *Independent* targets educated Ni-Vanuatu and French and English expatriates. The publisher would like to distribute the newspaper to all secondary schools and has been seeking assistance from the French Embassy to finance this.

The *Independent* is distributed mainly in the two town centres and only a few copies in the islands through post offices. The Editor believes the paper is expensive for the islands at Vt200 per issue.

The *Daily Post* targets all age groups and has no specific preference for any age group or gender. The *Daily Post's* online service targets people overseas interested in news about Vanuatu. Approximately 3000 people access its website every week, though it is not available locally, to preserve the sale of the newspaper.

The *Daily Post* is distributed everywhere there is a post office, and delivered directly to Santo and Ambae Islands. The paper is currently looking at increasing the distribution volume to the other islands. The Editor said the problem with increasing distribution relates to language, as the paper is printed in English. The Bislama language could improve the distribution as it is the common language in the rural areas and outer islands, where the majority of people may not write or

understand French or English. The Editor says a survey could assist with finding out how many people in rural areas can read the Bislama language.

ni-Vanuatu targets Ni-Vanuatu and foreigners. It will distribute to businesses, Provincial Headquarters, Malvatumauri, National Council of Chiefs, the Women's Crisis Centre, and some government departments, as well as 200 free copies to schools.

Port Vila Presse Online targets Ni-Vanuatu and people overseas.

2.5 Audience research

The VBTC has never carried out formal research due to 'lack of direction' and funds. The General Manager said it learns about its audiences through Members of Parliament, ministers, letters to journalists and phone calls complaining of poor television reception. The Editor added:

I suppose most practitioners in the media field believe that they have a fair idea of the radio listeners in their area at least in their home islands or through the nakamals in towns. It is a small place. The radio used to be heard by everybody a few years ago. I think you will recall how it was pretty much a rush to hear the 12 o'clock news. Then it was the main media and people would tend to consider the 12 o'clock news as being the most important media event of the day. Since then it has changed because the radio is known to just rehash what the Daily Post has written.

The *Independent* ran a survey soon after it started. People were asked to fill out a questionnaire about the paper for a chance to win the cost of school fees. Through its first survey, which only involved 40 respondents, the paper learned what was most appreciated (in order of importance): local news, the quality of journalism, letters to the editor, editorials, opinion of politicians, advertising, sports, international news, format of paper, social news, crosswords and the colouring page.

The *Daily Post* ran a survey in 1999 and this confirmed that a large number of people read the paper. While one person may buy the newspaper it was estimated that another seven people read the same paper. The *Post* also receives letters from its readers every day, some of which are published.

2.6 NGO and government access

The cost of access to Radio Vanuatu is around Vt21,000 per 30 minutes, and Vt40,000 for TBV. The VBTC has only been contacted by a few NGOs and government departments about airtime because, as the VBTC journalists interviewed noted, airtime is expensive:

Our offer is limited due to our current financial situation. We allow, for example, free airtime to Vanuatu Family Health Association. Press releases and news stories and interviews are free services to all categories of people in Vanuatu. Government departments use our free services, press releases, interviews, development, and new.

The VBTC journalists said they had no regular contact from NGOs or government departments, and described NGOs as 'passive'. They said NGOs and government departments only make contact when they have an interesting issue for the media. The journalists felt NGO-media and government-media networks would be 'a step forward in the development of media in Vanuatu'.

CRest FM has a standard rate for all programs up to a maximum of 30 minutes of Vt500 per broadcast. There are no reduced rates or free timeslots. All potential NGO producers are being encouraged to do weekly programs that are timeless in nature so that these can be repeated for a considerable length of time to maximise the return of the investment. CRest has received programs from Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group, and other NGOs have expressed interest in producing local programs in all the subject areas mentioned earlier. It also expects programs from various UN agencies.

At the *Independent* NGOs have to pay for their notices. Advertisements range from Vt1000 to Vt50,000. If they want to write an article, the paper would speak to them first and then suggest the length of the article. It would prefer to interview them about their subject matter. This could be done free within the scope of the paper's objectives.

The *Independent* said that no NGO produced regular media content, press statements or articles. The paper has a women's column, but this is prepared and written by its journalists. It believes part of the problem is lack of access and/or knowledge of email.

When there is a story, the journalists contact the NGOs or government departments if they have not contacted them first. The journalists do not ring around every day. They expect the NGOs or government departments to contact the paper if they have something.

The *Daily Post* charges NGOs and government departments for advertisements or special announcements. The *Post* gives them free space for press statements or articles but this is entirely at the discretion of the Editor, depending on the content of the article. Charitable organisations receive a 25 per cent discount on advertisements. The Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW) has a weekly page free; there is a free page for the Cultural Centre and any development news is free. The *Daily Post* would like more news items from these two sectors.

The *Daily Post* also said it would be helpful if all government department media personnel were trained in how to use email. This would make it easy for them to supply the newspapers with their news. Currently there is no constant supply of news from either government departments or NGOs.

The journalists do not contact these two sectors on a regular basis. The main reason for this is a lack of human resources, as the Editor explained:

We are a small paper and if the NGOs want us to publish something they have to move. In bigger papers overseas they have teams of journalists specialised in NGOs or other groups. The PM's office has been publishing press statements, four or five, since they started two months ago. We hope they will continue.

For the *ni-Vanuatu* NGOs or government departments can write stories for publication (at no cost) but it is at the Editor's discretion as to whether they will be accepted. Advertisements have set rates.

Port Vila Presse Online would like to encourage NGOs to publish on the site, something they have not done to date.

2.7

Journalism resources

The VBTC has nine journalists: six in radio and three in television. The journalists have between 12 and 20 years experience. The VBTC is now targeting recruits with an academic qualification. Prior to this recruits had to have Year 12 and journalism experience. Only one journalist currently has a degree in journalism (UPNG). Three of the journalists said they do investigative reporting.

The pay scale for VBTC ranges from Vt23,000–150,000 monthly.

Reasons given for leaving the VBTC were being made redundant and political interference.

CRest FM employs one experienced radio journalist and the rest are volunteers. The CRest Adviser said:

There are no qualifications necessary ... We are not looking for super sophisticated programming but rather a grass roots approach. All of the presenters, producers and workers are volunteers; no one gets paid, including the Board of Trustees.

The *Independent* has five journalists who have between two and twenty years experience, with the majority having seven to fifteen years on average. The journalists have no formal qualifications, but they have attended many workshops. The Editor said:

I believe that what is needed is experience. You don't necessarily need a degree. I am not sure that the training that has gone on years ago is bearing fruit for a lot of people. There are a number of people who have degrees in journalism allegedly who barely touch on journalistic subjects, and those people are not very useful as journalists.

Recruits need to have completed Year 12 schooling. There are no investigative journalists. Pay scale is Vt60,000–120,000 monthly.

The *Daily Post* has ten journalists: seven full-time including three at its Santo office, and three freelance journalists who work exclusively for the *Daily Post*. It has previously employed recruits with experience but would prefer to employ qualified journalists. Five of the journalists at the *Daily Post* have formal qualifications (UPNG, Wellington Polytechnic and Auckland Institute of Technology, now Auckland University of Technology). The journalists do not have the time to do investigative journalism, as the paper's staff is too small. Two of the journalists write on corruption issues.

Pay scale is Vt66,000–124,000 monthly.

There is a low turnover of staff at the *Post*, with one leaving for personal reasons and one going to work as the PRO for the Vohor Government.

ni-Vanuatu employs two journalists and an editor. The Editor has 20 years experience, one journalist has a degree in journalism (USP), and the other attended a journalism course at Auckland Institute of Technology.¹² All three are former VBTC journalists. Salary range is Vt30,000–50,000 per month.

The Publisher of Port Vila Presse Online has 20 years journalism experience. He compiles the news for the online service from other news media sources and does not employ journalists.

Equipment resources

As noted earlier, the VBTC production and transmission equipment is dated, broken down and poor quality. Funding cuts have also meant that telephone and internet use has been restricted.

CRest FM has access to equipment through the Tafea Provincial Government Education Office, including portable recorders and a studio editing console that can also be used for broadcasting. Telephone access is extremely limited due to the archaic phone system that exists. Equipment includes two transmitters, a solar panel and miscellaneous equipment worth about US\$30,000 (AU\$37,500) for one radio channel. The CRest Adviser said:

Any of our producers can use any cassette machines they can lay their hands on ... if the quality is too bad, and then we will tell them. We make two portable machines available and expect to be able to purchase more as money is available and demand is created.

The *Daily Post* has computers, laser printer, printing press, email and internet access. The Editor said they need more powerful computers to increase production. The *Daily Post* has access to the telephone on the islands where they are installed. It says the cost is cheap. Remote areas with no modern telecommunications link are never contacted.

Journalists at the *Independent* have access to computers, the telephone, internet and tape recorders. The telephone access to the rural sector is at the same rate as the town, but 'the telephone bills are outrageous', according to the Editor. 'The month of June was Vt120,000 just for local phone calls. Every time journalists ring a mobile phone even if it does not answer the charge is Vt34.' The newspaper printing is done by a private printing firm. The equipment was described as adequate.

At *ni-Vanuatu* the equipment consists of one computer with access to email and internet, one digital camera, one telephone line, one scanner and one colour printer. The newspaper is printed in New Zealand. The Editor said the equipment is not adequate as three journalists share one computer.

2.8 Local news and current affairs content

Radio Vanuatu has three news bulletins a day and the TBV has two bulletins. The commercial FM music station broadcasts shorter versions of the news on the AM service. Radio Vanuatu also produces magazine programs, sports news, Pacific programs, studio guest spots (every Sunday afternoon and Monday evening), and a *tok-back* program. The latter has stopped temporarily due to the telephone cuts. Locally produced programs are mainly in Bislama, but some are in English and French.

CRest FM's Adviser said:

We do not decide what is broadcast, the community will tell us what they want to hear about and we will ask them to provide that programming. Supply and demand.

The station will not use any outside news sources as it is a Tafea-based station and is concerned with initiating and stimulating communication in this province. At some future stage the board may consider using an outside news source to allow for greater access to world news. This has not yet been discussed, and CRest cannot afford the satellite receiving equipment required.

2.9 Number of daily local news stories

Radio Vanuatu produces 12 to 13 local news stories a day, while the TBV produces 6 to 7 stories on average.

The *Independent* has 20 to 30 local news stories and the *Daily Post* has 15 to 20 per issue. It is too early to say for *ni-Vanuatu*, but the estimate is 80 per cent of 16 pages will be local news.

2.10 Media and governance priorities

The VBTC stated that its governance priorities are corruption in the public sector, including mismanagement and misallocation of public funds, nepotism, political corruption, misuse of official power in official capacity, health awareness, HIV/AIDS, malaria control, agriculture development, copra and cocoa production quality, vanilla production, rural fishing development, law and order, crime prevention awareness, domestic violence and land policy awareness.

However, according to the former Chair of the VBTC:

There does not appear to be any priority in good governance or any priority at all as there are not enough journalists and no means. They seem to have lost direction and wait at their desk for people to bring news items to them ... [They also lack] professional journalists, I mean journalists who do their job properly with experience and in accordance with journalistic ethics.

In addition to this, years of close government oversight have limited the VBTC's capacity to be a source of independent or analytical reporting. In its National Integrity Country Study 2004, Transparency International notes that there is a perception that the VBTC does not produce stories about corruption of Members of Parliament or their supporters, and that journalists practise self-censorship.¹³

CRest provides airtime for live broadcasts of any provincial government meetings or events. The radio station is adjacent to the Provincial Government buildings. These meetings would all be broadcast in their entirety except where the length exceeds the power stored in the station's solar powered batteries (six hours).

The *Independent* cited politics, all forms of discrimination and corruption, activities led by communities or NGOs, and health and education. If governance is broadly defined, most of the journalists are involved in some type of governance issue.

The priority governance issues of the *Daily Post* are government and corruption. The Editor said, 'As the last Ombudsman has been very quiet, we inherited the role of watchdog over the government in the country.' The newspaper also covers health and women's issues.

The focus at *ni-Vanuatu* is on nationalistic values, a sense of belonging to Vanuatu and the role people play to develop Vanuatu positively. Its good governance issues include government services delivery, human rights, health education and awareness, agriculture development, educational programs for small-scale industries that suit Ni-Vanuatu, law and order problems, the promotion of custom and culture, and sports development news.

None of the mainstream media surveyed reported receiving any donor funding to produce governance media content.

2.11 News-gathering techniques

The VBTC's main news-gathering methods are telephone, press releases, interviews, monitoring other stories in the *Daily Post*, the ABC, BBC, RFO Tempo, wire services from Pacific news organisations and Reuters. The services are free. However, this is currently affected due to telephone cuts.

The *Independent's* journalists use interviews, press releases and press conferences, but no internet. The *Independent* does not use other news services as it concentrates on local news.

The *Daily Post* uses interviews and occasionally press conferences when they are held, PINA Nius Online and internet sources.

ni-Vanuatu uses telephone contacts, email, internet and interviews.

2.12 Media access to government content

The Government of Vanuatu does have a website at <http://www.vanuatugovernment.gov.vu/vanuatugov.html> but the majority of pages are not operational.

The *Daily Post* asked the government if it could access the Council of Ministers meeting but has had no response. The Council of Ministers meet every Thursday morning unless there is an emergency. The ministers attend with the attorney-general. The newspaper would also like to attend a weekly press conference with the Prime Minister. According to the Editor:

They all say yes, but it never happens. We would like to have all the decisions of the Council of Ministers to be made public but they are not. We would also like to have access to the archives after a certain number of years.

Hansard is not available. The only way to record information in Parliament is on tape so that this can be transcribed by the translation department, but the sound system has been defective for years.

Parliament is broadcast live on Radio Vanuatu when in session.

2.13 Constraints on local news production

News production at VBTC has been constrained by the Corporation's cost cutting (telephone and internet), industrial disputes, politicisation and the lack of professionally qualified journalists and poor quality equipment.

Available staff, equipment and space, the amount of advertising and audience interest constrains local news production at the *Independent*. According to the Editor, the main limiting factor is that the newspaper is a paper of review. It therefore has to incorporate a week's news into each edition. The staff work from Monday to Thursday. On the last day, they do not finish until 10pm and then start again early the next morning to make sure they incorporate the latest news.

At the *Daily Post*, the available number of staff also influences how many stories are produced.

For the *ni-Vanuatu*, constraints include having only one computer to produce the paper, one digital camera and one telephone line, and the high cost of communication charges from Telecom Vanuatu Limited and Unelco for energy, and the lack of government incentive to promote *ni-Vanuatu* as a small-scale industry.

2.14 Threats to funding

The VBTC said its annual grant has never been reduced by government due to concerns about editorial content, and no business has withheld advertising payments. However, as noted, the VBTC is suffering from serious funding problems.

Neither of the newspapers has had government or business funds withdrawn due to editorial content.

Stories on corruption can result in problems for journalists. In 2003 the publisher of the *Vanuatu Daily Post* was assaulted and hospitalised after publishing stories about corrupt management practices at the Vanuatu Maritime Authority. In 2001 the publisher of the same paper (which is no longer published) was deported for publishing claims the government described as negative and baseless about the relationship between a businessman and the then government.¹⁴

2.15 Industry training

The VBTC runs some on-the-job training and introductory training of two weeks for new journalists. Support was expressed for journalists who would like to study and work, but none have been interested.

CRest FM offers basic courses in radio production, usually in three categories: writing and producing, interviewing, editing. 'We provide the station's equipment to any and all schools within Tafea to create a journalism course if they so wish.' (CRest Adviser)

The *Independent* has no recruits, only experienced journalists. One journalist is currently studying for a degree in media (Australia) by internet. It is possible for the journalists to be given up to 10 hours a week to study part time and keep their job.

The *Daily Post* gives preference to online training courses.

In order to raise journalism standards, the President of the national media association suggested:

Every journalist should undergo full tertiary education as it is rather difficult to raise the level of media process due to lack of understanding. The other problem we have is the level of language [for English and French] and English and French journalists. Most of the time it is difficult to reach a compromise on certain important issues as we have undergone training under two separate systems of education. As president, I find it rather difficult to bring things together and work towards a more effective media association. We are studying the situation and hopefully we would be able to come up with a constructive way out.

2.16 Code of ethics for journalists

There is a general code of ethics for all journalists, but it has not been formalised yet by the Media Association Blong Vanuatu. The current president of the Press Club has developed a draft based on a PNG Journalist Code of Ethics. The first draft has been distributed to the members. The Editor of the *Daily Post* has also just started the Commonwealth Press Union in Vanuatu.

The CReST Adviser said its code of ethics is honesty. 'The community decides and will let the station know if it is broadcasting anything else.' CReST is also planning to produce and broadcast a series of programs on ethics.

2.17 Industry self-regulation

Press Club Blong Vanuatu was established in 1997, and changed its name to Media Association Blong Vanuatu in 2002. It has its own constitution and is open to every media organisation in Vanuatu. Currently it has 40 active members.

The Association has no paid staff and there is no office space. Members meet on an ad hoc basis. It has an executive comprising of a president, vice-president, secretary, vice-secretary, treasurer and vice-treasurer. The current President spends approximately one hour on Association work weekly.

The President said the Association has received a number of complaints from individuals and organisations about the behaviour of some journalists. He said there is no mechanism to enforce a code of ethics. 'Therefore it would not create a big impact on journalists unless the government establishes a Media Council. In the case of Vanuatu, an establishment of a Media Council is too distant.'

Since the President commenced in 2002 he has organised some cross-sectoral workshops. He invited the Chief Justice to brief journalists on the role of the judiciary and organised a media-NGO workshop. This is to encourage cooperation between these sectors and brief them on the importance of the role of media in Vanuatu and their contributions to strengthening and improving the media process in Vanuatu.

2.18 Observations on media industry capacity

- There is an urgent need to repair the VBTC transmitters so that radio can be broadcast throughout the country without interruption on shortwave, and to review the overall technical capacity of the VBTC, given the deficiencies noted with current equipment.¹⁵
- Stabilise the VBTC (management and Board) and improve its separation from government, through a review of its legislation, management, Board structure and appointments.
- Explore cost-effective alternatives to battery-run radios in rural and outer island areas to increase potential radio listening.
- Private papers need to explore more effective distribution networks in the islands to increase their distribution.
- Encourage local media to hire new journalism graduates as there has been very limited new blood in the Vanuatu industry in the last four or five years.
- Provide formal training opportunities for journalists who have not had the chance to go to university.
- Strengthen the national media association, and design and implement an industry-wide code of ethics and establish a complaints committee.

3. GOVERNMENT SECTOR

3.1 Government sector media capacity

The PRO position in the Prime Minister's office is a political appointment that changes with the prime minister. The PRO is the government spokesperson. Their role is to provide information to the public about government policies and government departments, issue press releases, and arrange press conferences and ministerial briefings. The PRO for the Vohor government concentrated more on political issues for the Prime Minister. In other government departments there is no PRO position and someone has to shoulder this extra responsibility as part of their other duties.

Of the 13 government departments, five produce regular media content: Agriculture, Women's Affairs, Meteorology, Health and Education, while the Labour Department and the Electoral Office use the media when necessary and the Public Service Commission publishes a newsletter. The Vanuatu Cultural Centre, a government agency under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is a major media producer. The Department of Strategic Management used to produce media content (radio, video and print) on the Comprehensive Reform Program, but has not produced any since 2000, when donor funding ceased.

Human resources

As noted above, there is one PRO working with the Prime Minister. Agriculture and Health each have two officers involved in media production; Education has one officer and a technician; Women's Affairs relies on a volunteer from overseas; Meteorology, the Electoral Office and Labour each have officers who include media as part of their other tasks rather than having a specific media officer; and the Public Service Department employs a journalist to produce its newsletter. The Vanuatu Cultural Centre, in comparison, has four full-time media officers. The Department of Strategic Management does have a media officer, but he is currently only producing occasional press releases.

3.2 Government media processes

The Prime Minister's PRO declined to be interviewed for the survey, so it was not possible to list what the Vohor government's media processes are. The government departments listed below mainly use press releases and to a lesser extent produce radio programs and newspaper articles for their media content. Email use is limited due to its cost and restrictions on accessibility.

3.3 Government department media content

The Department of Agriculture produces awareness programs on agriculture. This included an agriculture radio *toktok* program, which stopped in 2000 due to the cost of airtime on the VBTC. Currently the department targets free services such as development news on radio. It invites radio journalists to its office to interview information officers (once a month) and issues press releases. It produces weekly information on agriculture in the *Independent* newspaper for the farmers and produces a one-hour agriculture program on the Trinity Broadcasting Network's FM radio station (at no cost). It hopes to reactivate a quarterly newsletter to distribute to farmers.

The Ministry of Public Health produces radio productions such as jingles, radio spots, short productions on public health issues, malaria control (use of mosquito nets), dengue fever, the parasitic disease filariasis, HIV, anti-smoking campaigns, and service messages and programs for international health days like the World Non-Tobacco Day and HIV campaigns. The department also works with the Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group and a private video producer to produce videos on malaria control. It used to publish a health newsletter but this stopped in 1999, and there is now no officer to produce it.

The Department of Women's Affairs' main media content is a monthly women's page in the *Daily Post* newspaper at no cost. The page covers work activities of the department, policy and planning, and staffing. The department would like to create its own online news service but this is still in the pipeline. It is not producing any programs on the VBTC because it does not have a media officer and is in the process of recruiting one. The cost of airtime is also too expensive and the department has not budgeted for this. The other weekly newspaper, the *Independent*, also prints free of charge any article or news presented by the department and has a women's section in its paper every week.

The Electoral Office media content consists of production for VBTC (radio and television) from January to June every year for the voter registration period, and press releases and interviews conducted by the VBTC with the Principal Electoral Officer. The Principal Electoral Officer also writes occasional news articles and messages for the *Daily Post* and the *Independent*. The office produces more information for the media during the election period. The content depends on the type of election, whether a national general election, municipal elections, presidential elections, a provincial election or elections of the chiefs to the Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs. The Electoral Office has found the cost of access to the media is a barrier to effective awareness of the electoral matters. 'Media is too expensive ... For recent snap election we spend Vt501,750 on Television Blong Vanuatu alone during the preliminary awareness.' (Principal Electoral Officer)

The National Office of Labour produces content for the media on Labour laws, regulations, policies and the International Labour Organization (ILO) ratified conventions. The purpose is to educate

both the employers and the employees about compliance. The usual format is press releases. The department also produces information for the *Daily Post* and the *Independent* newspapers at no cost. 'However, whether they will carry the news on their paper or not is at their discretion.'

The Meteorology Department is responsible for weather forecasts and warnings. Four officers collect data and provide information about the weather pattern. This consists of radio production: daily weather forecast every morning, and press releases for the radio and the press (*Independent* and *Daily Post*). The latter is usually information about the environmental impact of different weather patterns. A monthly publication called *Vanuatu Weather Update* is also produced. Up to 30 copies each month are distributed to schools and to some government departments that need them. The newsletter normally carries information on weather patterns, information on sea surface temperature, rainfall statistics, weather prospects, cyclone outlook and other weather information and advice. The department sends information to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) website so people can assess this through the international website.

The Department of Education produces a weekly program on the VBTC. The program informs the general public on education policies. There are some educational programs that target school children (primary), such as on the rights of children, children's stories and programs for teachers and parents. There are special programs for the national examination preparation and the official examination results. The department also produces press releases. It has no online news and it does not publish a newsletter.

There is a project funded by the Australasian Association of Distance Education Schools (AADES). It targets primary school leavers with educational radio programs to give them a second chance to pursue their education through distance education. It has currently been halted by the department.

The Public Service Commission publishes a monthly newsletter called *Singaot*, printing 2000 copies every two or three months. This newsletter is prepared by a media officer and funded by the Public Sector Reform Project (AusAID). *Singaot* gives directives to civil servants and informs them of the commission's new initiatives. The newsletter has started to cover disciplinary matters involving public servants, and it publishes the department's annual stakeholder survey.

The Vanuatu Cultural Centre has the primary role of preserving the custom, cultures and traditional values of Ni-Vanuatu. It produces audio and video productions, pamphlets and a newsletter. The centre has over 2000 cassettes and it allows people to hire custom cassettes, charging them Vt250 per night or Vt1000 to copy to their own cassettes. The centre has 100 field workers doing volunteer work in their community, and they are supplied with hand-held tape recorders and empty audio cassettes to interview and record old people for custom stories or custom histories. These cassettes are returned to the centre for preservation. It also has a weekly radio custom and cultural program every Saturday from 6.30 pm to 7.00 pm on Radio Vanuatu. Press releases are done by the Director from time to time, depending on any new issues or development within the cultural development of Vanuatu.

The Cultural Centre has a one-hour program on TBV every second Sunday. It has signed an agreement with the management of VBTC to allow VBTC journalists to use its equipment at any time in return for the Centre receiving a half-hour radio program and the one-hour television program for free. The Centre also has free space in the *Daily Post* each week to cover any news on the development of custom and culture in Vanuatu. Its newsletter is not issued regularly. It depends on funding. A website called Museum Shop is currently under development.

3.4 Media governance priorities

As noted earlier, the Prime Minister's PRO declined to be interviewed for the survey, and it is therefore not possible to list the government's priority media governance issues.

The media governance priorities for the Government Departments that produce media on a regular basis are detailed above in Section 3.3, Government Department Media Content.

3.5 Target audiences

Agriculture targets farmers in general; on policy issues it targets the government; on training issues it targets civil society with agriculture information; on economic and health-related issues it targets the whole population of Vanuatu.

Health targets the whole population of Vanuatu and, depending on the health issues, some content targets a specific group of people.

The target audience for the Electoral Office is the people of Vanuatu and those concerned with each issue, such as eligible voters, candidates and polling officers.

Press releases from Labour target employers and employees, the government and the people of Vanuatu. The monthly reports are sent to the government, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other ministries and government departments. For transparency and accountability, the department will shortly supply the monthly reports to the NGOs, the Chiefs and the public.

Meteorology's weather information is aimed at everyone in the country. However, as noted, this information is limited by problems with the VBTC transmission.

Education targets all areas of Vanuatu through its radio programs. However, the VBTC's transmission problem is serious and means that rural and outer island areas are generally not reached. 'I know that currently the Ministry and Department are working with the Provincial Councils to try and address this problem by involving these institutions in the delivery.' (Director, Planning and Policy Division)

The Public Service Commission newsletter is distributed free to government and the provinces.

The Cultural Centre targets Ni-Vanuatu of all categories, custom chiefs, tourists and the government. Feedback is mainly from visitors to the Centre, letters, phone calls and request for the Centre to record activities.

3.6 Qualifications and training

Agriculture has two officers involved with media production. One officer has a degree in Agriculture (USP). He is not a journalist but is working as a media officer because of his qualifications in the agriculture field. The other officer is also an agriculture graduate. He has undertaken in-country media training, including production of extension materials, training in data collection, working with the media for public education and awareness of natural disasters, a regional workshop on production of quarantine campaign materials, and a regional workshop on basic video production for agriculture media workers.

Public Health has two production officers: one has a Certificate of Public Health Nursing and the other is a teacher who attended a three-month graphics course in Fiji (USP) in 2002.

Women's Affairs has a volunteer from New Zealand's Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) who spends part of her time doing media work. As soon as an information and planning officer is recruited the department aims to produce more media information.

The Electoral Office does not have a media officer. This work is done by the Principal Electoral Officer and at times the deputy. None of the staff has had media training. 'Our media work was done by practical experience alone. I support the view that training for the media officers is very important.' (Principal Electoral Officer)

Labour does not have a media officer. The Acting Commissioner of Labour produces the content with some assistance from other officers. The Commissioner has budgeted for airtime on the VBTC next year, with Vt350,000 to be set aside for one 15-minute program every two weeks. The program is not confirmed yet. The officers have not received any media training. The Commissioner would like to get training for the office staff in how to write, edit and disseminate news stories, training in media production, interview techniques, use of computers and digital cameras, and an English language course.

Meteorology's four officers are responsible for the weather forecast and media content. Each officer has a qualification in science, meteorology or demography, and none has had media training.

At Education there is one full-time media officer and one technician. The media officer has had no experience in media. The technician has attended a media course in Australia 10 years ago. He has also done some in-country media training funded by the SPC and AusAID.

The Public Service Commission's newsletter is produced with assistance from a journalist. He is hired only to do this. The journalist has no formal journalism qualification, but he has experience working as a journalist. There is no on-the-job training provided. The Commission said it needed training in how to write a news item: condensed, limited to the points and facts. 'Usually, the press statements are too long for the use of the newspapers and the radio. The item must also be made newsworthy to sell to the papers.' (Secretary)

The Cultural Centre has five officers, including the Director, who are responsible for media production. The Curator and the Assistant Curators of the National Film and Sound Unit, and the two officers responsible for audio-video cassettes, camera operation and video editing are full time, and the Director spends about two hours a week on press releases, the newsletter and other printed materials. The Assistant Curator said the Centre required five more staff — a qualified technician, video camera operator, editor, marketing officer and producer/scriptwriter. The Cultural Centre requires officers to have knowledge of computer and camera usage, documentary program production for radio and television, knowledge and respect for the custom, culture and traditions of Vanuatu, to be committed and able to work as team members and have knowledge of the English, French and Bislama languages. Officers from the Cultural Centre do not have formal media or journalism qualifications. Some have qualifications in other disciplines. They have undertaken a mix of short courses and work attachments (BBC). Media training priorities include: on-the-job training or attachments with advanced cultural centres; and courses on how to preserve valuable custom assets, audiovisual archiving, audio archiving, marketing and producing.

3.7 Equipment

Agriculture has two computers, one printer, email access, a digital camera, two direct telephone lines linking rural areas and the outer islands, a printing studio for photo development, one tape recorder, one video and audio deck used for recording of information programs as well as educational awareness for farmers, and a video cassette room (air-conditioned) funded by the government of Vanuatu. It needs to replace most of the equipment because it is too old and the department is planning to increase its production next year.

Public Health's production officers have access to two computers, internet and email, one photocopy machine, laminator, scanner, video recorder, and a video camera. There are no direct phone lines, with access through extensions only. Equipment is funded by the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Vanuatu Government. All equipment performs adequately except the old photocopy machine.

Women's Affairs has telephones that can access the outer islands and rural areas. The new telecom rates are the same for the islands and town, which has facilitated a lot of communication with the islands. Recently two of the computers were updated and the Director and the receptionist have access to email and the internet. Apart from the computers, telephones and photocopy machines, there is no other equipment for media production.

The Electoral Office has four computers, email, internet access, one laptop (needs PowerPoint and screen), digital camera, two telephones that can access the rural areas and outer islands where telephones are installed, photocopier, fax machine and tape recorder. The Vanuatu government funds the equipment. The office said the equipment is not adequate as it needs to produce more election awareness programs.

Labour has two computers but no email or internet access. The department can access rural areas where there is a telephone, including other island district offices. To use email or internet the Commissioner of Labour has to go to an internet cafe in town and the department pays. He said that the office needs more computers to network information between relevant departments, and to create a research facility.

Meteorology uses seven computers, email and internet and one photocopier. Some of the computers were donated by the WMO and others by the Vanuatu Government. The computers are the main media production tool.

Education has access to one computer, one mixer, one tape recorder, one CD machine, a sound system, microphones, three hand-held tape recorders, telephone, direct fax and 'other technical apparatus that a modern production station has'. The Japanese government funds the duplicating machines and Vanuatu government funds the other equipment. The department does not have reliable internet access. The equipment is considered adequate to meet its needs, except the recording room, which is not soundproof.

The Public Service Commission has computers, email access, photocopiers and direct telephone lines, and this is adequate for its needs.

The Cultural Centre has a range of digital video and audio recording and editing equipment, but the Assistant Curator said the Centre requires additional equipment (not specified) to adequately perform its work.

3.8 Government–media relationships

As noted in earlier sections on media regulation and public broadcasting, government–media relationships in Vanuatu can vary depending on the government. In the late 1990s, when Prime Minister Natapei was in power, the private media (newspapers) were generally free and only experienced limited political interference from the Office of the Prime Minister, and other ministries. However, Transparency International Vanuatu reports that over the last few years, there has been an increase in efforts to control the media by groups or businesses that object to critical articles about a politician or their island. During the survey period, as noted, the Vohor government sacked the VBTC Board, and the former Chair of the Board said there were signs that the government ‘wanted to control what was coming in and out of the VBTC’. This included restricting some NGO access to airtime and censoring Opposition views.¹⁶

The Media Officer, Department of Strategic Management, believes that the government should

set up a communication network linking all Ministries [Director-General level] to a centralised Prime Minister’s Press Officer. This would facilitate and improve the flow of information to all ministries, departments and the Prime Minister’s officer. We are not sure if and when this system will eventually come into effect. The problem is money to fund such initiatives.

As for our Department, I see my role as media officer very important. We are here to inform the people. The changes in government affect them and they have the right to know and prepare to meet the changes. This is what transparency and accountability is all about. The problem I face here in this office is no funds. We have to push harder for more funds from the government or increase our efforts to convince the aid donors for financial assistance. However donors fund specific projects and as soon as the projects end, funding too ceases therefore media, in funded projects, is not sustainable.

3.9 Observations on government media capacity

- A number of government departments would like to have the capacity to use the media better, especially the national radio service, Radio Vanuatu, when the transmission is fixed. Currently lack of human resources and funding for programs, and the cost of access to Radio Vanuatu have hampered this.
- Most government departments do not have media officers, and the officers who do produce media content have to do this along with their other duties.
- A whole-of-government communications strategy that included access to resources could assist with this. This strategy would include the Prime Minister’s office and include media awareness training and workshops with the media to improve networking. It would also need to tackle the issue of cost of access to the VBTC, and how the public service broadcaster can be more accessible.
- Given some of the political tensions surrounding government–media relationships, a series of workshops and meetings involving key government members, heads of department and senior media people, could assist to lay the foundation for improved interaction.
- Government could also be encouraged to give some consideration to increasing media diversity and removing the VBTC from its regulatory role.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

4.1 Civil society organisations

There are 159 registered NGOs, 89 active and 70 provisional, and the Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (VANGO) has 70 financial members.

The NGOs producing media content that were interviewed for the survey are: the Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW), the Vanuatu Women’s Centre (VWC), Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group, Vanuatu Rural Development and Training Centre Association (VRDTCA), Save the Children Fund, Vanuatu National Workers Union (VNWU), Vanuatu Family Health Association (VFHA), Transparency International Vanuatu (TIV), the Catholic Church, and the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSP), Vanuatu.

4.2

NGO media content on governance issues

The main governance priorities for NGOs are domestic violence, misuse of public funds by leaders, HIV/AIDS awareness, environmental protection, human rights, protecting the rights of children, gender issues, land rights issues, poverty, unemployment, small-scale rural development projects, promotion of village sanitation, health, law and order problems, education, promotion and preservation of culture, and labour issues.

- VNCW produces a weekly page provided free by the *Daily Post* on issues of poverty, human rights, violence against women, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS awareness, women in business (small village projects such as chicken projects and pig husbandry), women and children's rights, and development issues.
- VWC has a weekly program on the VBTC on violence against women and general women's rights. This is one of the most regular programs produced by NGOs. VWC also produces a newsletter that is inserted in the *Daily Post*.
- Wan Smol Bag produces a radio drama series which is 15 minutes long and broadcast on the VBTC six times a week throughout the year. The series is based mainly on STIs/HIV/AIDS awareness and productive health rights. Other issues such as corruption, domestic violence, scams, electoral rights, gender and other health and governance issues are also covered from time to time. The Rural Water Supply Department has also commissioned Wan Smol Bag Theatre to carry awareness information in the series on water supply systems. The program is broadcast in PNG and the Solomon Islands through Radio Australia's Tok Pisin service.

Wan Smol Bag also produces a radio documentary series, Toksave Long Loa, which is aired three times a week on the VBTC. Usually 12 to 16 of these programs are produced and aired each year with rebroadcasts of the series the following year. The programs focus on different parts of the Constitution and discuss typical issues from both a lay and legal point of view; video programs on a range of issues covering HIV/AIDS awareness, reproductive health issues, corruption, electoral rights, environment, population, urban drift, child rights, gender issues, domestic violence, substance abuse and other health and governance issues. At least one video is produced a year; radio spots, video ads and music cassettes on all the abovementioned issues; and print material including posters, user guides for videos and music cassettes, cartoon booklets, drama scripts and drama guides.

- VRDTCA's newsletter covers areas such as training and education, human rights issues, rural development, economic issues and improvement of livelihood within the community. A VRDTCA radio program was discontinued when funding ceased in 2002. The main issues covered in the radio program were educational issues, advocacy in education and development issues.
- Save the Children has four main project areas: Health, Children's Rights, Child Protection, and Community Development. Different officers are responsible for producing media information in relation to their program's activities. There are radio programs, a local newsletter and a regional newsletter that is jointly produced by other South Pacific Save the Children organisations. Press releases go to the media but not on a regular basis. The officers also write scripts and send them to Wan Smol Bag Theatre to produce.

The media content covers child rights advocacy, including the right to education and adequate healthcare facilities; protection from sexual abuse, physical abuse, threats and neglect; and the enforcement of the rights of children stipulated under section 19 of the Convention for the Rights of Children.

- VNWU produces press releases and interviews for newspapers and radio and television news regarding misuse or mismanagement of public funds in a public organisation. Currently there are no radio programs. Press releases are provided to Radio Vanuatu. This is not done on a regular basis — sometimes once a month.
- VFHA produces a weekly radio program of 15 minutes on general and reproductive health. However, since the departure of its CEO in July 2004, the radio programs have not been broadcast weekly. The health awareness programs include family planning, reproductive and sexual health, HIV/AIDS information and services outreach, the elimination of unsafe abortion, the health of children, health of women and teenage pregnancy.
- TIV produces a newsletter every one to two months. This is printed and also distributed by email. It also produces regular press releases on issues linked to corruption and governance

when appropriate, and for educational purposes. TIV used to get regular access to the Radio Vanuatu but, during the Vohor Government, this became difficult.

- The Catholic Church produces a bi-monthly publication in colour called *Eklesia*. Production is funded by the Church. The newsletter is described as a medium of communication between the Bishop and all Catholics throughout the Vanuatu dioceses. 'It is a two-way communication where the Bishop communicates the Church policies, doctrines, spiritual messages to the people and the local churches and the different church organisations convey their issues too through this medium.' (Diocesan Director of Social Communication)

Eklesia contains some material on governance issues, such as education policies of the Church, development of new classrooms, teacher training, parents' responsibility to educate their children, school fee structures, Church school curriculum developments and the promotion of good values among politicians.

- FSP produces a 30-minute weekly radio program on Radio Vanuatu, an annual newsletter and community video programs. Topics covered include domestic violence, women's rights, awareness of international conventions on women and children, youth at risk, good governance and sustainability, resource management, education, and news on workshop content, such as the development of a new Family Protection Bill. FSP has also initiated an NGO think tank via the internet to improve and strengthen networking between NGOs in Vanuatu.

The majority of the NGO media content listed is produced in Bislama, with some English only.

4.3 Target audiences and audience monitoring

VNCW targets women and children, chiefs, church leaders, community leaders and men. It is a national women's organisation that covers all provincial councils, the municipal council, churches, the 16 island councils of women and the village women's organisations. It gets feedback from members through letters, telephone or personal visits to the office. Sometimes it is very difficult to contact remote areas due to communication problems.

VWC targets the population of Vanuatu, including both men and women, and also the chiefs, to fight violence against women and to modify the attitudes of the whole population concerning family violence. Feedback comes through telephone calls, letters, people visiting the office, members coming in from rural areas giving reports to the centre, and clients coming into the office seeking assistance.

Wan Smol Bag's target audiences are youth, children, parents, men, women, chiefs and community leaders. It carries out a listenership survey for its radio programs and collects feedback on its videos. It also runs a quiz alongside the radio programs at certain times of the year and offers a prize to listeners for sending in correct answers.

VRDTCA's target audiences include youth in rural areas, Rural Training Centre (RTC) managers, trainers and community leaders. The newsletter is also sent to other stakeholders, such as government departments and NGOs in Vanuatu, provincial headquarters, schools and churches:

Sometimes it is difficult to say whether our audiences read the newsletter. Most of our target audiences are rural based; they do not have access to telephone or post office to tell us their views. We only receive comments from other NGOs, communities who have telephones and radio where our Peace Corps volunteers are located. (Training Officer)

Save the Children targets chiefs, community leaders, church leaders, parents and the government:

We interact with communities and we distribute the newsletters and brochures. The radio programs have their limitation but we are not sure many of our targeted audience get the messages through their leaders and our visitation to the communities helps to raise the level of communication and has more impact. (Country Program Director)

VNWU's target audience is civil society, VNWU members, the public at large and young people. The union has 1200 members, and receives feedback through phone calls to its office from its members and other people.

VFHA targets women, youth, children, community leaders and all people of Vanuatu. 'We have feedback from the members and constant visits to our projects sites and continue interaction with the communities around the country from the Torres group to the Southern part of the country.' (CEO)

TIV targets the whole population: children through the education process by introducing civics course in the curriculum, and adults to increase the awareness on corruption and its effects.

The Catholic Church's newsletter *Eklesia* is for people of all ages, but mainly Catholics. One thousand copies are distributed around the islands. 'It is a quality newspaper which is costly to produce therefore we charge Vt100 to cover production cost per issue.' (Diocesan Director)

FSP targets women, men and children, and receives feedback on its media content in letters from the public and reports from rural committee members.

4.4 NGO media capacity

VNCW has one officer who works on press releases and a weekly page in the *Daily Post* as part of her other duties. She is assisted by a Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO) volunteer.

VWC has no specific media officer; one person does this as part of their other duties with some assistance from other staff. Duties include writing press releases and the centre's newsletter, and producing a weekly program for Radio Vanuatu.

Wan Smol Bag has 15 officers involved in media production. Except for a full-time camera operator and editor trainee, none of the other staff work full time on media. Specific media duties include: writing drama scripts, directing drama recording, filming and directing, sound recording, interview collecting, editing and production of radio documentaries and drama series, and writing press releases.

VRDTCA's Training Officer produces the newsletter as part of his other duties. He spends about three hours a week on this. He has a degree in journalism (UPNG). VRDTCA used to have a media officer for a Department for International Development (DFID) funded project but this position ceased when the project ended in 2002.

Save the Children has two qualified journalists who were both former VBTC journalists. One has a degree in journalism (USP) and the other a diploma in journalism (USP). Both work on media production as part of their other duties.

VNWU's two officers, the Media Representative and the President, write the releases and go on the radio as part of their other duties. The Media representative has a degree in journalism (University of Canberra) and has media production skills.

At VFHA, three officers spend part of their working week on media production. Each has a different area of content expertise: educational awareness programs, health awareness programs and youth development.

TIV does not have a media officer. The two staff members usually take care of the radio interviews and the newsletter. Board members produce the press releases, assisted by the staff members.

The Catholic Church's Diocesan Director produces *Eklesia* and some religious material to go on the air every seven weeks on the VBTC. A volunteer assists with the radio programs.

FSP has 10 officers, consisting of a core staff of four and project officers, who share media production duties as required, along with their other work. The amount of time officers spend varies, but it was estimated that about 10 per cent of a project officer's time can be spent on media production in a week. This could include press releases, radio interviews, video production and slide shows.

4.5 NGO media officer qualifications

VNCW officers working in media need to be committed, have knowledge of financial management, knowledge of computers and be able to work with women. VWC looks for officers who are committed, respect the rights of women and knowledge of media production techniques.

Wan Smol Bag requires an active interest in the issues addressed and the willingness to learn on the job. Basic computer knowledge and good communication skills are a big bonus.

VRDTCA requires journalism and/or media production experience or qualifications.

As noted, Save the Children has two qualified journalists. The Country Program Director said it is important for other staff contributors to have basic media training in writing press releases, scriptwriting, the language of journalism and interview techniques, and computer training for the creation of websites.

VNWU requires analytical, critical and investigative skills, and production skills.

VFHA does not have a media officer, but if they did would like the officer to have a journalistic background to ensure that the message 'passes well to the grassroots'. The general qualification of its officers is high school level (Years 10–12).

TIV does not require media qualification. The media officer is a first-year university student and the Manager is a former nurse with 15 years experience in NGOs.

The Catholic Church's Diocesan Director completed a diploma in journalism in France and is a qualified teacher.

FSP officers have had little to no media training, and this is not a requirement for the project officers working with the media. FSP would like to create a position for an information officer, but does not have the funds for this.

4.6 Media training for NGO officers

The VNCW officer has had in-country on-the-job training, attended a youth conference in Malaysia funded by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and a two-week course in Japan on processing women's information. The *Daily Post* has offered to help the VNCW write journalistic articles. The VNCW officer said they need to learn to write articles in good English and in a more journalistic way, to get to the point more briefly.

When the VNCW's new Research and Development Centre funded by the European Union (EU) is completed it plans to employ a full-time media officer as there is EU funding for this position.

The VWC officer has attended a media course in PNG (1983) on 'how to produce a media program' funded by the Malaysian government and another course in Fiji run by the SPC. The VWC said it would like in-house training on how to prepare media materials.

Wan Smol Bag's theatre officers have received training mostly on the job but also through short courses by local and overseas experts. At this stage Wan Smol Bag's officers have no immediate need for training.

As noted, VRDTCA has a qualified journalist and he said he has no immediate need for additional training.

The Save the Children's Country Program Director said the two journalists at the NGO could carry out on-the-job training for other officers who are not familiar with media production. However, structured in-house training is not in place.

The VNWU Media Representative is a qualified journalist, and he would like additional training in TV production and direction, newspaper journalism, radio talkback presentation, and photography.

One officer from VFHA went to Fiji for a month and was taught basic skills in all aspects of media (newspapers and radio). Training needs include: skills to prepare a newsletter, writing skills for press releases so messages are clear and concise, and techniques for radio program production. The VFHA also said that it would be useful to have a journalist based at VANGO who could assist all the NGOs, as they cannot finance a full-time media officer.

TIV's officers need media awareness training, to improve their existing skills to prepare the newsletter and to learn how to prepare their own radio programs, and more practise with English language skills.

The Catholic Church does not have the funds to provide media training for staff, and FSP did not list any staff media training.

4.7 NGO media production equipment

VNWC has one computer, one telephone that can access the rural areas, including the outer islands, and email access. It hopes to increase the media production equipment when its Research Centre opens. The VNWC believes that its equipment is adequate for its current level of production.

VWC has two computers, internet, one laptop, a digital and a manual camera, photocopy machine, tape recorder and materials for developing posters. The VWC would like to create a space for students and public members' research. Its equipment is adequate for its current production.

Wan Smol Bag has a fully equipped radio studio, filming equipment, video editing suite, recorders for interviews, computer, internet access, and telephone access to rural and outer islands. It said its equipment is adequate.

VRDTCA uses a computer to produce the newsletter and a local printer to print copies. This is an added expense for quality purposes. There is an old scanner for pictures but it is not working and there is no digital camera. The PC is very old. Internet access is available but expensive, and a digital camera is needed.

Save the Children has computers, a photocopier and a digital camera. They would like one more digital camera, hand-held tape recorders and a scanner.

VNWU has access to telephones, a digital camera and a hand-held tape recorder. VNWU said the equipment was not adequate and that it needs access to a non-linear editing system and a radio studio.

VFHA has one tape recorder, five computers, email access, internet, one digital camera, photocopier, telephone that can access the rural area and outer islands. The radio programs are produced at the VFHA in a very basic way, without assistance from the VBTC. The VFHA used to use VBTC's equipment but it said it is in such poor condition that it finds it impossible to rely on.

TIV has two computers, internet access and telephone.

The Catholic Church has one computer, a digital camera and radio recording equipment. The newspaper is printed by a local printing company. The Diocesan Director described this as adequate 'but if the VBTC changes to digital we will have a problem with our radio programs as we do not have the proper equipment. In general we only have a poor and small recording equipment.'

FSP has computers (laptops and desktops), unlimited internet access, a wireless local area network, computer projector, and an online content management system. It is well equipped, with up-to-date equipment.

4.8 NGO media processes

VNCW has a weekly free space offered by the *Daily Post* and free radio press releases, so the costs relating to media expenses are limited.

VWC provided the following costs: special 30-minute television program, Vt30,000; television campaign, Vt82,000; and radio production, Vt82,000. Publication of newspapers (quarterly publication), Vt375,000. Insertion of the VWC newsletter in the *Daily Post*, Vt30,000 on a quarterly basis.

Wan Smol Bag's radio drama series costs Vt22,500 per week; the radio documentary series Vt20,000 per week. Costs for radio spots, television advertisements and video programs vary. Wan Smol Bag would like to broadcast its video programs on TBV but it charges commercial rates and this is too expensive.

Save the Children's newsletters are internally produced and printed, then photocopied.

VNWU said access to all the media is very costly but there is a VNWU strategy to have access to the VBTC as part of an agreement reached during the union dispute with VBTC (radio and television).

VFHA has free weekly airtime on Radio Vanuatu for a 15-minute program; press releases and messages are free on the radio and in the newspapers. VFHA is allocated an annual budget from IPPF to fund its operation but there is no budget for media expenditure. Other projects funded by the EU, AusAID, and WHO also have no media component.

TIV generally has free access to the radio and the newspapers to issue press statements and articles. The newsletter is prepared on its computer and copied on its photocopier.

The Catholic Church does not pay for access to the VBTC, and it funds and produces its newspaper.

FSP spends around Vt200,000 each month, but did not specify how much was spent on the radio program and other media content. It also has some free access to media, but details were not provided.

4.9 NGO community radio or television

Wan Smol Bag explored this and found that it would be too difficult as there are hills and mountains around Vila, and it also would be costly to operate. The VDRC has explored this too but said no funding agency is interested in supporting such a project.

4.10 Funding for media content

VNCW has received EU funds for its new centre and media officer, and VWC's main donor is AusAID. Wan Smol Bag's major donor was DFID; however, this has now ceased. Current donors

include Oxfam NZ, the Packard Foundation, AusAID, the World Wildlife Fund and the EU. FSP has received funding from the European Union, NZAID, AusAID, and the Foundation of Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI), Fiji.

4.11 Observations on civil society media capacity

Currently, with the exception of a few NGOs that produce media programs or articles, there is little regular contact between the NGOs and the media.

- *We need to produce more media awareness. At the moment there are limitations [on] funds, equipment, manpower and training. (Save the Children)*
- *[It is] passive not active. We are not very active as we need funds to do more media awareness and [improve] the equipment. The other NGOs could also benefit from the arrangement. (VNWU)*
- *[It is] very important that people should be educated and informed of the issues that constantly affect them. Health is everybody's concern therefore we have a big responsibility to educate them. The government is not doing much and they are the one to be playing a leading role here. (VFHA)*
- *Most see the media as a critical tool in ensuring public awareness and dialogue. It is not, however, the only means of creating awareness. Custom plays a very important role ... As part of a campaign [the media] can be useful tools, used in conjunction with public meetings, service provision, word of mouth, and direct interaction with communities/groups. (FSP)*
- *When NGOs do programs they should do them regularly. It can be a problem of lack of funding when the media projects stop and there is no more funding to continue paying programs on the radio, or slackness when the program is not ready ... the media [also] have a big problem. Journalists are not active enough and do not look for news. The media people are not acting; it can be a problem of funding or of slackness. (VFHA)*

The following suggestions were made to address these issues:

- NGOs should establish close links between themselves first. This would facilitate NGO interaction with the media. In relation to NGO and media interaction, the VNCW said, 'We recognise the importance of having this network but it is up to VANGO to take up this initiative.'¹⁷
- Better use of the internet and independent media. An NGO website could pave way for improvement with the media.
- There is a need to identify the leading NGOs and people who use the media and who have the relevant qualifications. NGOs could help each other and set up an umbrella organisation (which could be managed by two or three active NGOs). This could include resources such as equipment and a media person who can provide training.
- Donor assistance should be sought for establishing community radios where the NGO staff members could get training and develop their media skills.
- A central system could be organised to distribute radio tapes among community radio stations.
- NGO officers need self-confidence, a good knowledge of the subject matter and story-telling skills, and writing skills for newspapers and radio to publicise their activities and messages.
- Need to organise more communication between the media, the NGO and the government departments.
- Need to improve distribution of written materials in the islands by improving the distribution network and creating a common address listing for NGOs that would allow good and timely circulation of information in the islands.
- Churches are also involved in good governance and have a lot of influence in rural areas. They have sometimes even less funding for media work than the NGOs and should be considered as part of any NGO media initiatives.
- The Vanuatu National Council of Churches should also be involved in training in media projects and in any sharing of techniques or equipment for the purpose of developing ethics.
- Television has not been seen as a priority as it reaches only a limited geographic area of the country and is extremely expensive. This is not likely to improve in the near future.

¹ Source: <http://www.vanuatu.net.vu/VanuatuOnlineDirectory.html>

² Transparency International National Integrity Systems Country Study Report, Vanuatu, 2004, p. 5.

³ All currency referred to in this chapter is in vatu (Vt). Vt1.00 equals approximately AU\$0.012 and Vt100 equals approximately AU\$1.19.

⁴ Transparency International National Integrity Systems Country Study Report, Vanuatu, 2004, p. 55.

⁵ See Section 1.6, Public Service Broadcasting, for details.

⁶ Transparency International National Integrity Systems, Country Study Report, Vanuatu, 2004, p. 24.

⁷ Source: Transparency International Vanuatu and the former Chair of the VBTC Board, Mrs Evelyn Toa. (This is currently a matter of possible legal action where the informant is the plaintiff.)

⁸ 'VBTC Board members stage battle with PM after dismissal', PACNEWS online 3rd edition, 6 September 2004.

⁹ CReST FM commenced broadcasting early in 2005, outside the survey period.

¹⁰ It is reported that the problems with the shortwave service have existed since 2000. See 'VBTC Board members stage battle with PM after dismissal', PACNEWS online 3rd edition, 6 September 2004.

¹¹ Source: Port Vila Presse website, in English, 2 December 2004.

¹² No details were provided on whether this qualification was completed.

¹³ Transparency International National Integrity Systems Country Study Report, Vanuatu, 2004, p. 52

¹⁴ Transparency International National Integrity Systems, Country Study Report, Vanuatu, 2004, p. 24.

¹⁵ As noted, in December 2004, outside the survey period, the VBTC entered into an agreement with Radio Australia to assist with the repair and upgrade transmitters. Further improvements are planned following this. See Port Vila Presse website, 2 December 2004.

¹⁶ The new Lini government has now employed its own Prime Minister's PRO and appointed the PRO as the Chair of the VBTC Board, thus further tightening the links between government and the VBTC.

¹⁷ As noted, there is already a think tank initiated by the FSP. It was created to facilitate and provide a method by which interested people could raise issues affecting the country or their organisation and allow others to comment. It is a debate of sorts on the internet.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH TEAM

SANA Coordinator

Dr. Helen Molnar, Executive Director, MC Media & Associates, Melbourne, Australia designed the survey with input from key stakeholders, coordinated the fieldwork and data collection, and was the principal researcher. She wrote the regional overview and country chapters using the interview transcripts gathered by the in-country researchers.

Communications and media law

Andrew T. Kenyon (Director) and Kate MacNeill from the Centre for Media and Communications Law (CMCL), University of Melbourne, wrote Chapter Two, Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media.

The CMCL undertakes large scale research projects, holds public seminars about legal and regulatory developments, supports research visits from Australian and international academics, lawyers and policy makers, and supervises undergraduate and graduate teaching in media and communications law.

Pacific Islands news content analysis

Steve Sharp, Lecturer, Journalism Programme, the University of the South Pacific (USP) conducted the Pacific Islands news content analysis and supervised the coding of the content at USP. The findings are reported in Chapter Three.

PACIFIC IN-COUNTRY RESEARCHERS

Cook Islands

Researcher: Jason Brown.

Jason Brown has reported on politics, economics, health and governance issues since February 1982 for *Cook Islands News* and Cook Islands Television (CITV), and his own paper, *Cook Islands Press* during the late nineties. He has also freelanced for news organisations like RNZI, AFP, AP and regional magazines like *Islands Business*. Jason had a short-term position as a public relations officer for the Cook Islands government in 1989, and during the survey period, held a six month position with the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation (PIAF) as its information officer. Jason has set up Avaiki Nuis, the first online news agency in the Cook Islands and is currently the Editor.

Fiji Islands

Researcher: Sharon Rolls.

Sharon Rolls has over a decade's experience working in the media sector (radio, television, and video production) in Fiji, and is one of the leaders in NGO media training and production development. She has presented papers on community media and women's rights at national and international forums. Her current position is Coordinator, fem'LINKpacific in Suva.

Assistant researcher: Joe Yaya, Assistant Tutor, USP Journalism Programme. Joe has a degree in journalism and finance (USP) and has been tutoring in journalism for two years.

Assistant researcher: Devika Narayan, Circulations and Documentation Officer, PIANGO. Prior to taking up her position with PIANGO, Devika was a journalist at the *Fiji Times*.

Administrative assistant: Eunice Fong, Student, USP Journalism Programme.

Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei and Kosrae)

Researcher: Giff Johnson.

Giff Johnson has over 20 years experience as a journalist and editor. He is the Contributing Editor, *Pacific Magazine* (monthly published in Honolulu), and a correspondent for AFP, RNZI, and the *Marianas Variety*. He is on the board of the NGO Youth to Youth in Health. Giff has been the Editor of the *Marshall Islands Journal*, the only independent newspaper in the Republic of the Marshall Islands since 1985.

Kiribati

Researcher: Joe Yaya, Assistant Tutor, USP Journalism Programme, Fiji.

Assistant Researcher: Rooti Terubea, Senior Editor, Radio Kiribati News, and President, Kiribati Islands Media Association (KIMA).

Nauru

Researcher: SANA Coordinator.

The nominated in-country researcher was unable to complete the research, and this was subsequently conducted by the SANA Coordinator through a series of interviews by telephone and email.

Niue

Researcher: Patrick Lino.

Patrick Lino has almost 20 years' media experience in a range of areas including journalism, government information, community radio and video editing. He has been General Manager of the Broadcasting Corporation of Niue (BCN) since 2002, and was previously acting General Manager from 1991-97.

Palau

Researcher: Bernadette Hernandez Carreon.

Bernadette Carreon has worked as a print journalist in the Philippines. She joined the *Palau Horizon* in 2001, and is currently the senior journalist. She has also taught journalism at the Palau High School.

Papua New Guinea

Researcher: Anna Solomon.

Anna Solomon is a media development pioneer. She was founding chair of the Media Council of Papua New Guinea, the Editor of Word Publishing, and has served on the PINA Executive. Anna has worked as a media relations officer for government and advised NGOs and churches on media capacity. She is currently working for the PNG Events Council.

Republic of the Marshall Islands

Researcher: Giff Johnson. See FSM entry for details.

Samoa

Researcher: Lance Polu.

Lance Polu is experienced in both government and private media (radio, print and television) and is currently Publisher/Editor of *Le Samoa*, a weekly bi-lingual newspaper. He is a former President of the Journalism Association of Western Samoa (JAWS) and is currently President of PINA.

Researcher: Gardenia Brighouse is the deputy Press Secretary, Government Press Secretariat and an executive member of JAWS.

Solomon Islands

Researcher: Ashley Wickham.

Ashley Wickham has 25 year's experience in media. He has been the General Manager, Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC), Educational Broadcasts Officer, Regional Media Centre, SPC, Suva, and a consultant on a range of UN and European Union projects. He is currently the Managing Director of TeleVision SI Ltd and is continuing his consultancy work.

Researcher: Julian Maka'a is a Senior Officer, Wantok FM, SIBC, and a member of the executive of the Media Association of the Solomon Islands (MASI).

Tonga

Researcher: Sr. Sinai Vaka'uta.

Sr. Sinai has 12 years experience in the print media, and has been an active member of the Media Council Incorporated and advocate for journalism training. She is a trained teacher and has just completed her Masters in Communications at Canberra University, Australia. Sr. Sinai was the Assistant Editor *Taumu'a Lelei* Catholic Press during the survey period. She is now based in New Zealand.

Assistant researcher: 'Ana Tapueluelu, Senior Reporter, *Taumu'a Lelei* Catholic Press.

Tuvalu

Researcher: Susie Saitala Kofe.

Susie Saitala Kofe is a former Director of the Department of Women's Affairs and has been the Legal Rights Training Officer, Tuvalu National Council of Women (TNCW) since 2001. She has extensive experience with community liaison and training, and has presented papers on human rights and women's issues at regional and international forums. She is a very active NGO media producer, and presents regular programs including talkback on Radio Tuvalu on governance issues.

Vanuatu

Researcher: Marie-Noelle Ferrieux Patterson.

Marie-Noelle Patterson is a former Ombudsman of the Republic of Vanuatu. She was instrumental in the development of the Francophone Vanuatu University Centre, and is currently President of the Vanuatu Chapter of Transparency International and a board member of the Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW). She is also a practising lawyer.

Assistant researcher: Willie Pakoa, Office Manager and researcher, Transparency International Vanuatu.

PACIFIC ISLAND NEWS CONTENT CODING

Seini Lakai, PINA Secretariat, Fiji assisted with coordinating and collecting the news content from PINA members.

The coding of the 3496 news stories was carried out by third year students in the Journalism Research class at USP in late 2004. Participating students were:

- Losana McGowan, Tara Chetty, Taberannang Korauaba, Shivanjani Naidu, Shoma Prasad, Zameel Khan, Ana Tudrau, Joy Angi, Anaseini Vakarauvanua, Joanna Olsson, Makereta Saeni and Shane Hussein.

Additional coding was done by Topou Vateitei, Fiji.

The Media Council of Papua New Guinea collected the PNG media content and coded it. The officers involved were Margaret Thomas and Isobel Popel.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH AND STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Roland Rich (Director) and Michael Morgan (Deputy Director) of the Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI), Canberra, a governance training centre working in the Pacific and Asia funded by AusAID, contributed to the initial design of the research model and later provided feedback on the development of the strategies relating to institutional strengthening and capacity building.

Andrew Booth, Institutional Development Specialist, provided feedback on the initial design of the research.

PRODUCTION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Production support: Shelley Wilson and James Montgomerie, Melbourne Development Institute, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Editor: Kerry Davies, Kerry Davies Publishing Services, Toowong, Queensland.

Report design and production: Integral Graphics, Beaumaris, Victoria.

APPENDIX B: SANA REFERENCE GROUP

Dr Helen Molnar, PMCF SANA Coordinator and Chairperson
Noa Seru, AusAID, Suva, Fiji

Forum Secretariat

Ulafala Aiavao, Media Adviser, Forum Secretariat
Mose Saitala, Governance Adviser

Secretariat of the South Pacific

Jimmie Rodgers, Deputy-Director General, SPC, Fiji
Aren Baoa, Regional Media Centre, SPC, Fiji

Media Sector

Lance Polu, PINA President (Samoa), SANA researcher
Francis Herman, CEO, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited
Sr Sinai Vaka'uta, Assistant Editor, *Taumu'a Lelei* Catholic newspaper, Tonga, SANA researcher
Tony Yianni, Managing Director, Fiji Times Ltd
Shailendra Singh, Lecturer, USP Journalism Programme, Suva, Fiji
Peter Aitsi, Head, Media Council of Papua New Guinea
Dr Kris Ninkama, Managing Director, National Broadcasting Corporation, PNG
Peter Tareasi, General Manager, FM100, PNG¹
Daryl Tarte, Chair, Fiji Media Council

Government Sector

Eliki Bomani, Deputy Secretary, Information and Media Relations, Ministry of Information, Communications and Media Relations, Fiji

Civil Society Sector

Felicity Bowen, CEO, PIANGO (up to end 2004)
Cema Bolabola, CEO, PIANGO (2005 onwards)
Devika Narayan, Circulations and Documentation Officer, PIANGO, SANA researcher
Sharon Rolls, Coordinator, fem'LINKpacific, SANA researcher
Marie-Noelle Ferrieux Patterson, lawyer, Transparency International Vanuatu, SANA researcher

Key Agencies

Sandra Bernklau, Project Manager, RRRT, Fiji
Garry Wiseman, Regional Programme Manager, UNDP, Fiji
Shashikant Nair, Acting Team Leader for Thematic Group & Governance Specialist Governance, UNDP, Fiji

Invited members²

Isabel Fox, Communications Officer, Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International, Fiji
Bernadette Rounds Ganilau, Independent Consultant, Fiji
Steve Sharp, USP Journalism Programme, Fiji

¹ Peter Aitsi, Dr. Kris Ninkama and Peter Tareasi each attended one meeting on behalf of the Media Council of Papua New Guinea

² Each invited member attended one meeting.

APPENDIX C: SANA QUESTIONNAIRE

GOVERNMENT

Legislative environment

Ministry of Information, Communication or Media

Questions

1. Does the Government have a Department for Information, Communications or Media or equivalent?
2. What is its name, and what are its main roles?
3. If not, does the Prime Minister or President's Office take charge of media legislation and regulation?
4. Is there a separate Government department that oversees telecommunications? What is its name?

Legislation and regulatory issues

Questions

1. Is the right to Freedom of Information guaranteed in the constitution?
2. Is there separate Freedom of Information legislation?
3. Is freedom of the media guaranteed in law? (For example, is this guarantee in the Constitution and/or Freedom of Information legislation, or the specific legislation relating to the operation of the media organisation).
4. List the title(s) of all current legislation relating to the operations and licensing of public broadcasting (radio and TV), community radio and TV, commercial media (radio and TV), and cable and/or satellite delivered TV services. When was the legislation put into place?
5. Does the public broadcasting legislation include details on how the public broadcaster (radio and TV) operates separately from government and is responsible for its own media content and staff appointments. If a section/s like this are not included in the legislation, why is this the case?
6. What are the local content requirements are for radio and television stations (this includes community, public service and commercial stations)? (Please list) For example, are licensees required to produced a certain number of hours of local content and is the type of content specified (local news, cultural programs, drama and so on).
7. Provide details of the community service requirements in the radio and TV (public and commercial) legislation. For example, are radio and TV stations required as part of their licences to provide free (or reduced cost) airtime to community groups and to candidates for political office so that they can broadcast programs and announcements?
8. Is there legislation for newspaper licensing?
9. What is this legislation called and when was it put in place?
10. Is it possible to get a licence for a new commercial radio station, television station, or newspaper within a reasonable time period? For example, within 24 months.

11. Is there legislation in place for community radio (not-for-profit) or community TV station licences? If not, why not?
12. What fees are payable to the Government for different licence categories (community radio/TV and commercial radio/TV, and a newspaper licence)?
13. Does the Government department responsible for issuing radio, TV and/or newspaper licences have staff who monitor whether the media meet their licence conditions? If so, how many people and what are their roles?
14. In the past five years, has a licence application been refused or has a media organisation lost its licence? If so, please explain reasons for this.
15. How is defamation (published or broadcast libel) defined in your country?
16. Are there any censorship laws – and to what content do these apply?

Government funding for media

Questions

1. How much funding does the Government provide for public radio and TV and newspapers?
2. Do the media that receive Government funds need to raise other funding to top this up – if they do, what proportion of their funding do they need to raise?
3. Does the Government appoint the General Manager or CEO of the Government funded media organisation/s?
4. Is the decision based on recommendations known to the public?
5. To whom is the CEO, Manager or Newspaper Editor at each government funded media organisation *directly responsible*? A board appointed by government, a government minister and/or the PM?

MEDIA

Number and type of media outlets

Questions

1. How many media organisations are there in-country?
2. Please list
 - a. each media organisation in the country including media organisations based in metropolitan, rural and outer island areas;
 - b. its category (for example, national public service radio, commercial radio, community radio, community TV, public service TV, commercial TV, and daily, weekly, monthly newspapers and online news services. Online news services may only be produced in this form and/or may be the online version of news published by a radio or television station or newspaper); and
 - c. who owns and operates the media organisation.
3. How is each of these media organisations funded?
4. What is the program format of the radio and television stations?
5. What is the focus of the newspapers?
6. What is the target audience or audiences for each media organisation? List age groups, gender and parts of the country that the media organisation targets. (From your own experience and observations, which media are the most popular with different age-groups and why?)
7. What is the transmission range of each radio and TV station in relation to the entire country (including outer islands)?
8. Which parts of the country do not receive the national public radio, and which parts of the country do not receive TV? Are these areas able to receive any other local media?
9. Where is each newspaper distributed, and which parts of the country are not covered by the newspaper distribution?

Media-community and sponsorship issues

Questions

1. How often do the radio and television stations do audience research about their audiences' viewing or listening patterns and their program interests, including news and current affairs?
2. How often do the newspapers survey readers about their reading habits and news interests?
3. Who conducts this research for the media organisations?
4. If the media organisation does not do audience research, why is this?
5. What have the media organisations learnt about their viewers'/ listeners'/or readers' news, current affairs and information interests from these surveys and/or other forms of audience feedback such as letters and telephone calls?
6. If an NGO or Government department would like to produce a program and broadcast it on radio or TV (public service and commercial), how much does it cost them to buy radio or TV airtime? [Please give costs per blocks of time, such as 15 minutes and 30 minutes]. Are there reduced rates for NGOs and Government departments?
7. Which radio and television stations (public service and commercial) have free community service timeslots? What time of day are these available and what type of content is broadcast?
8. What is the situation with the print media – do NGOs and Government Departments need to buy space for articles they write and want published?
9. Which NGOs and Government departments produce news, information or development content on a regular basis (say weekly or monthly) including press releases for the different media organisations?
10. If the media organisations have received donor funding to produce media governance content, please detail which donors, the topic and the year.
11. Has the government ever withheld core funding or withdrawn government advertising from media organisations due to concerns about editorial content? Has the corporate sector withdrawn advertising from media organisations due to concerns about editorial content? If this has happened, please provide a brief example including the year this occurred.

Local news and current affairs content

Questions

1. On average, what is the total number of local news stories produced daily in each newspaper, online news service, and radio or TV station?
2. How many local news bulletins does each radio or TV station broadcast daily?
3. What factors influence the number of local news stories produced for these different media? (Available staff, equipment, timeslot/available space, amount of advertising, audience interest and so on).
4. Which radio or TV stations produce a current affairs magazine program and/or talkback programs on current issues? List the program names and how often these programs are produced, for example, weekly, fortnightly.
5. In what languages does each radio and TV station broadcast news and current affairs?
6. In what languages are the newspapers and online news services published?
7. What equipment do the news and current affairs journalists have for news/current affairs production (computer/Internet access, ability to edit audio/video on computer, radio and TV production equipment, studios, hand held tape recorders for interviews, and telephone access to rural and outer island areas)?
8. How adequate is this equipment for the work they perform?
9. How does the news reflect the interests of people living outside metropolitan centres in rural areas and outer islands?

Media and governance

Questions

1. What are the priority governance issues covered by each media organisation producing local news?
2. How do the newspapers and radio/TV stations decide what local news is in the public interest?

Journalism resources

Questions

1. How many journalists does each media organisation have?
2. On average, how many years' journalism experience do the journalists have?-
3. What is the pay scale for the journalists?
4. What is the minimum level of education required for journalism recruits at each media organisation?
5. What training do the media organisations provide for their journalism recruits in their first year on-the-job and how often is this conducted?
6. How many journalists have a certificate, diploma or degree in journalism? Please also list from which training institution e.g. USP, UPNG, DWU and so on.
7. How many of the journalists have a specialist degree or major in areas such as economics, health, business, management, social sciences, science, agriculture or development studies, and what are the specialist areas?
8. Is it possible for journalists to study part-time (attending classes during the day) and remain on full salary? Are there any journalists currently doing this?
9. How many investigative journalists writing on corruption issues are there?
10. Does each media organisation have a code of ethics or mandate for its journalists? If yes, please provide details on what the code or mandate contains. How does the media organisation make sure journalism staff put this into practice?
11. On average, how long do journalists stay with each media organisation and what reasons do they give for leaving?
12. What are the main news gathering techniques, in priority order, used by journalists at each organisation? (Press releases, interviews with sources, press conferences, the Internet and so on).
13. Can the media access Government speeches, briefings, and policies via the Internet? What is available and how current is the material? How useful is this for news coverage?
14. Which regional or overseas news services (such as PACNEWS, Radio Australia, Radio New Zealand International, the BBC, Reuters, AAP, AFP, and so on) do the media organisations use and why?
15. Does the media organisation publish *all* its daily news online as well, and if yes, what audiences is it targeting with this service?
16. Have defamation and libel or censorship laws affected the news content at each media organisation? If yes, please explain in what ways?
17. Which NGOs and Government departments do the journalists at each media organisation *contact regularly* for news stories? (Regular is defined as weekly to monthly).
18. What networks or partnerships have the journalists at each media organisation established with Government and NGOs to make sure they get good coverage of these sectors?

Industry training

Questions

1. What media or journalism training is available in-country at Institutes of Technology or universities? What is the duration of each course?
2. Who is participating in these courses (school leavers and/or journalists)?

3. How many students can each course admit to its first year intake?
4. How many graduates (those who have completed the final year) in 2003, have found work in journalism? What percentage of graduates does this represent?
5. What post-graduate courses in journalism are available?
6. What links do the journalism and/or media courses have with the media industry (an advisory board of media representatives, work attachments, agreement to take graduates and so on)? How effective are these links, and what could be done to improve them?

Industry self-regulation

Questions

1. Is there an independent Press or Media Council or Tribunal that oversees journalism standards and hears public complaints about radio, print and TV news content? What is its name?
2. Describe how this Council is set up:
 - a. funding
 - b. members
 - c. separation from Government and industry
 - d. complaints process and types of matters its deals with
 - e. what actions can it take to resolve complaints?
3. How effective is the complaints process and what would improve this?
4. What suggestions does the Head of the Council have for increasing professional journalism standards in the region?

National media association

Questions

1. What is the name of the national media association? When was it established?
2. Is it representative of all media organisations in the country? If not, why not?
3. What is the association's mandate or charter?
4. How many staff does the association have and what are their roles?
5. How many hours or days per week do the key staff spend on association business?
6. How much funding does the association receive annually and from what source(s)?
7. Has the association developed a code of ethics for its members?
8. How does the association make sure its members meet this code of ethics?
9. Does the national media association develop training programs and other forms of professional development for its members? Please provide examples of the work it does in these areas. If it does not do this, why not?
10. What capacity building is needed to make the national media association more effective?
11. Are there any other professional organisations in-country representing journalists, for example, a journalism union or a union which represents journalists and media producers?

GOVERNMENT MEDIA CAPACITY

Government-public relations

Questions

1. Is there a Government Media/Information Unit/ Public Information Office or central Press Secretariat which handles Government-media relations?
2. Does this Unit handle the media work for all Government departments or only for the PM's office?
3. Describe this Unit's role and its relationship with the media.

4. How many people work in the Unit?
5. What are their positions?
6. How much funding does the Unit receive annually from Government?
7. In addition to the Government Media Unit, which high level government officers – the Prime Minister, President and/or senior Ministers – also have an individual media officer and/or press secretary attached to their office?
8. What are the usual qualifications for media officers and/or press secretaries working in the Government Media Unit, and/or attached to the PM and individual senior ministers?
9. What media training have they received while working at the Unit or as press secretaries?
10. What equipment does the Media Unit/Information Office have for media production (computer/Internet access, ability to edit audio/video on computer, radio and TV production equipment, studios, telephone access to rural and outer island areas)?
11. How adequate does the interviewee consider this equipment to be for the work they perform?

Government departments and development/governance media content

Questions

1. Which Government departments currently produce media content (e.g. agriculture, health, women's affairs, education and so on)?
2. Describe what media content each department produces and how frequent this is (radio, TV, community video, newsletters, press releases, print media articles and online news)?
3. Who are the target audiences for the Government department produced media content?
4. In what languages do the Government departments produce information for the media?
5. How many staff do these Government departments employ to produce this media content?
6. What equipment do the Government departments have access to inside their department for media production (computer/Internet access, ability to edit audio/video on computer, radio and TV production equipment, studios, hand held tape recorders for interviews, telephone access to rural and outer island areas)? If they have little or no production equipment, can they access equipment outside their departments?
7. How adequate is this equipment for the work they perform?
8. What are the usual qualifications that Government officers need to be media officers or producers in Government departments?
9. What media training programs have the Government officers completed to assist them with their media work (radio, TV, print, and online services)?
10. What additional media training priorities do the Government officers have, and why do they feel these are necessary?
11. Please ask the Government media officers you interview at each department to describe how they see their role in relation to the media.

Government-media processes

Questions

1. What established processes does the Government have for briefing the media? For example, press releases, press conferences (how often?), ministerial briefings to individual media, Government produced public radio and TV programs and so on.
2. Are the press releases also given in vernacular?
3. How does the Government monitor the effectiveness of its press releases and other Government produced media content?
4. Is there a media outlet (TV, newspaper, or radio station) that Government prefers to use and, if so, why?
5. Has the Government developed a website and, if so, what does it contain - speeches, press releases, and Government policies and processes? Please specify.

6. If a website like this does not exist, is Government considering this?
7. Is Hansard¹ regularly available to journalists and civil society organisations interested in parliamentary proceedings?
8. Are there live Parliamentary broadcasts on national public radio or television when Parliament is sitting? If not, how much of Parliament is broadcast?
9. What media training is available for Parliamentarians?
10. What training has the Prime Minister, President and senior ministers undertaken to assist their work with the media?

Government governance issues

Questions

1. What are the priority governance issues, which the Government communicates via the media (e.g. health, education, human rights, criminal justice, national security, others?)

Government media relationships

Questions

1. Does the Government feel that it has a working partnership with the media and, if so, can it explain how this operates?
2. What improvements does the Government suggest to improve the working partnership of Government and media so that the Government can get more governance information out via the media?

CIVIL SOCIETY MEDIA CAPACITY

NGOs media content on governance issues

Questions

1. How many registered NGOs are there in-country?
2. List the NGOs that are producing media content (press releases, radio or TV programs, community videos and newsletters) on governance issues? This could include economic issues, women's issues, human rights, the environment, development issues, civics, law and order, trade and business issues, health and other major public policy areas of importance to the individual country and/or region.
3. What media content does each of the NGOs produce; what is its governance focus and how often do they produce this content (for example, a public radio program on health program weekly)?
4. What languages do they use for the media content they produce?
5. What are the media governance priorities of the NGOs, and how similar / different are these from Government priorities?
6. Who are the target audiences for the NGO media content?
7. How do the NGOs know whether or not these audiences are listening to, viewing or reading the media content they produce?

NGO media capacity

Questions

1. How many NGO officers at each NGO are involved in media production (this includes press release writing)?
2. Which NGOs have one or more full-time NGO media officers?
3. If the NGO officers do not work on media production full-time, what proportion of their work is spent on media production or dealing with the media?
4. What specific media related duties do they perform during these hours?

5. What are the usual qualifications that an NGO officer requires to work in NGO media production?
6. What media training have the NGO officers received (either in short courses, on-the-job, or formally)?
7. What additional media training priorities do they have, and why do they feel these are necessary?
8. How well do NGOs understand media operations such as media deadlines, different types of media content requirements (news, current affairs, development programs and so on), and which media to use to target certain audiences?
9. What equipment do the NGOs have for media production (computer/Internet access, ability to edit audio/video on computer, radio and TV production equipment, studios, hand held tape recorders for interviews, telephone access to rural and outer island areas)?
10. How adequate is this equipment for the work they perform? If they have little or no production equipment, can they access equipment outside their departments?
11. How do the NGO officers at the focus groups that deal with the media see their media role?
12. On average, how long do the NGO media officers stay in this position?

NGO-media processes

Questions

1. How much does it cost the NGOs to access the media, for example national public radio and TV, commercial radio and TV, newspapers, and community radio and TV? (Specify cost per block of time or space bought.)
2. Apart from the specific radio/TV programs or newspaper articles the NGOs produce (as detailed above), what other processes or networks have these NGOs established with the media to encourage NGO-media interaction (eg, press releases, press conferences, and regular contacts with individual media staff and the media with the NGOs)?
3. How effective do the NGOs think these processes are?
4. What suggestions do the NGOs have to improve the interaction between NGOs and the media?
5. Which NGOs have explored the feasibility of running their own community radio or TV station and what was the outcome?

Financial and technical resources

Questions

1. Which NGOs have received donor funding to produce media content, for example, a video on malaria? List the NGOs, the donors and media content produced.

SANA Researcher recommendations

Based on the research you have done for this study, and your experience, what recommendations would you make for capacity building for each of the three sectors to improve the promotion of governance information through the media. Please list these under each sector in priority order in your final written report.

¹ The official published verbatim report of the proceedings of parliament

APPENDIX D: SANA INTERVIEW LIST SUMMARY

Country	Media	Government	Civil Society	Total
Cook Islands	7	5	3	15
FSM	9	7	2	18
Fiji	15	6	10	31
Kiribati	7	9	7	23
Nauru	1	7	0	8
Niue	3	5	4	12
Palau	5	7	2	14
PNG	14	16	9	39
Marshall Islands	4	10	5	19
Samoa	12	6	6	24
Solomon Islands	21	5	10	35
Tonga	8	9	6	23
Tuvalu	10	17	4	31
Vanuatu	11	12	9	32
Totals	127	121	77	325

SANA INTERVIEW LIST

All people listed without an * completed the full interview for their sector.

People listed with an * were consulted for information or background for a specific section of the SANA only and may not be quoted in the report.

COOK ISLANDS

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Florence Syme-Buchanan	General Manager	Cook Islands National Broadcasting Corporation (CINBC)	31 August 2004
Moana Moeka'a	Editor	Cook Islands News	15 September 2004
Wendy Evans	Governing Director	Cook Islands News Limited	16 September 2004
John Herrmann	Former member	Cook Islands Media Council	17 September 2004
Jason Brown	In-Country Researcher and Freelance Journalist	Information Officer PIAF	17 September 2004
Trevor Pitt	Company Director and Managing Editor	Pitt Media Group Newspapers (Cook Islands Herald, Cook Islands Independent and Cook Islands Times)	18 September 2004
Nannette Woonton Pitt	Director (News)	Cook Islands Television (CITV)	18 September 2004
Government			
Helen Wong	Chief Executive Officer	Cook Islands Broadcasting Corporation (CIBC) Board	31 August 2004
John Akavi	Senior Projects Officer	Ministry of Agriculture	16 September 2004
Tauraki Raea	Coordinator, International Waters Project	Tu'anga Taporoporo (Environmental Services)	17 September 2004
Cameron Scott	Manager, Government Media	Office of the Prime Minister	18 September 2004
Sister Ngapoko Short	Public Health Director	Ministry of Health	16 November 2004
Civil Society			
Dorice Reid Te Tikia Mataiapo	President	Koutu Nui (Traditional Leaders)	19 September 2004
Mona Matepi	Country Manager	World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)	19 September 2004

FSM			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Filmore Timothy	Station Director	Kosrae State Radio Station V6AJ	11 November 2004
Doug Kelly	Director, Media Studies Program	College of Micronesia, Pohnpei	6 December 2004
Harbert Tom	Instructor, Media Studies Program	College of Micronesia, Pohnpei	6 December 2004
Hirosy Santos	Acting Commissioner	Pohnpei Public Broadcasting Corporation V6AH	7 December 2004
Kenio Eperiam	Program Manager	Pohnpei Public Broadcasting Corporation V6AH	7 December 2004
Nathan McElheny	General Manager	Baptist Radio Station V6AF, Pohnpei	7 December 2004
Martin Jano	Attorney	Pohnpei	8 December 2004
Pamela Joseph	Acting Managing Editor	Kaselehlie Press, Pohnpei	8 December 2004
Berna Gorong	Managing Editor	The Yap Networker, Yap	29 December 2004
Government			
Franklin Frank	Public Information Officer	FSM Congress, Pohnpei	6 December 2004
Jolden Johnnyboy	Assistant Secretary of Communications	FSM Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure	6 December 2004
Lynn Narruhn	Public Information Officer	Office of the President, FSM National Government	6 December 2004
Oliver Johnny	School/Community Liaison	Department of Education, Pohnpei State	8 December 2004
Takuro Akinaga*	CEO/General Manager	FSM Telecommunications Corporation, Pohnpei	9 December 2004
John Sohl*	Deputy General Manager	FSM Telecommunications Corporation, Pohnpei	9 December 2004
Ringlen Wolphagen	Public Information Officer	Office of the Governor, Pohnpei State	9 December 2004
Civil Society			
Lara Federov	Deputy Director	Conservation Society of Pohnpei	8 December 2004
Fr Francis X Hezel, S J	Director	Micronesia Seminar, Pohnpei	9 December 2004

FIJI			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Francis Herman	Chief Executive Officer	Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited (FBCL)	3 August 2004
Matai Akauola	Director News, Current Affairs and Sports	FBCL	4 August 2004
Steve Sharp	Lecturer, Journalism Programme	The University of the South Pacific (USP)	4 August 2004
Ken Clarke	Chief Executive Officer	Fiji Television Limited	4 August 2004
Netani Rika	News Director	Fiji Television Limited	5 August 2004
Ian Jackson	General Manager	Communications Fiji Limited (CFL)	10 August 2004
Vijay Narayan	News Director	CFL	10 August 2004
Laisa Taga	Editor-in-Chief	Islands Business International	16 August 2004
Daryl Tarte	Chair	Fiji Media Council	16 August 2004
Makereta Komai	Senior Journalist	PACNEWS	18 August 2004
Fred Wesley	Editor and Acting Publisher	Fiji Daily Post	19 August 2004
Yashwant Gaunder	Editor	Fijilive.com	19 November 2004
Tony Yianni	Managing Director	Fiji Times Limited	27 October 2004
Evan Hannah	Training Director and Information Technology Manager	Fiji Times Limited	1 November 2004
Russell Hunter	Editor-in-Chief	SUN Fiji News Ltd	14 June 2005
Government			
Eliki Bomani	Deputy Secretary	Ministry of Information, Communications and Media Relations (MICMR)	6 August 2004
Suzie Naisara Grey	Chief Information Officer for Information and Media Relations	MICMR	12 August 2004
Alipate Mateitaga	Head, Film and TV Unit	MICMR	28 October 2004
Captain Neumi Leweni	Officer in Charge	Republic of Fiji Military Forces Media Cell	11 August 2004
Kamlesh Prakash	Principal Agriculture Officer, Information & Communication	Ministry of Agriculture, Sugar and Land Resettlement	18 August 2004
Moses Salusalu	Social Marketing Officer	National Centre for Health Promotion, Ministry of Health	17 September 2004

FJI cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Civil Society			
Dulcie Stewart	Information and Communication Programme Coordinator	The Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education & Advocacy (ECCREA)	24 August 2004
Siteri Kalouniviti	Information Officer	Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC)	24 August 2004
Sharon Rolls	Coordinator	fem'LINKpacific	24 August 2004
Agartha Ferei	Media Education Officer	Fiji Media Watch Group	31 August 2004
Devika Narayan	Circulations and Documentation Officer	Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO)	3 September 2004
Kuini Lutua	General Secretary	Fiji Nursing Association (FNA)	6 September 2004
Hassan Khan	Executive Director	Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS)	9 September 2004
Rev Akuila Yabaki	Executive Director	Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF)	10 September 2004
Tabua Salote	Coordinator	National Council of Women Fiji (NCWFiji)	13 September 2004
Rex Horoi	Executive Director	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)	15 September 2004
KIRIBATI			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Ieremia Tabai	Proprietor	Newair FM89 and Kiribati Newstar Newspaper	17 December 2004
Kaoti Onorio	Station Manager/Editor	Newair FM89	5 Oct/17 Dec 2004
Ngauea Uatioa	Manager and Co-Publisher	Kiribati Newstar Newspaper	15 December 2004
Tiroia Tabwea	Acting Editor	Te-Uekera Newspaper	21 December 2004
Batiri Bataua	Communications Manager	Kiribati Protestant Church (Te Mauri Newspaper)	21 December 2004
Konnang Taia	Station Manager	Broadcasting and Publications Authority (BPA)	21 December 2004
Rooti Terubea	Senior News Editor/President	Radio Kiribati (BPA)/Kiribati Islands Media Association (KIMA)	21 December 2004
Government			
Fulitua Taraora	Press Liaison Officer	Office of The President	4 Oct/15 Dec 2004
Kotii Toorite	Acting Chief Health Education Officer	Ministry of Health	4 Oct/16 Dec 2004

KIRIBATI cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Government cont.			
Akka Rimon	Assistant Secretary	Ministry of Communication, Transport and Tourism	28 Oct/15 Dec 2004
Monoo Mweretaka	Lawyer	Attorney-General's Office	28 Oct/16 Dec 2004
Rota Manako	Information Officer	Ministry of Agriculture	17 December 2004
Rine Ueara	Local Government Information Unit Officer	Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs	20 December 2004
Tinaai Meetai	Nutritionist	National Nutrition Centre	22 December 2004
Inspector Mareko Tekarika	Inspector	Kiribati Police Traffic Department	23 December 2004
Civil Society			
John Collins	Legal Rights Training Officer	Aia Maea Ainen Kiribati (AMAK), Kiribati National Council of Women	17 December 2004
Sister Teeneti Bakarereua		St Paul's Communication Centre, Kiribati Catholic Church	20 December 2004
Erineta Barako	Good Governance Project Officer	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSP) Kiribati	20 December 2004
Rosalind Kiata	Over the Waves Project Officer	FSP Kiribati	21 December 2004
Bakanebo Tamaroa	Coordinator	Kiribati Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (KANGO)	22 December 2004
John Anderson	Director/Co-Trainer	Nei Tabera Ni Kai (NTNK) Video Unit	5 April 2005
Linda Uan	Producer/Co-Trainer	NTNK Video Unit	5 April 2005
NAURU			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Michael Dekarube	Director of Media	Nauru Media Bureau	13 September 2004
Government			
Camilla Solomon	Chief Secretary	Government of Nauru	21 April, 5 May '05
Tyrone Deiye	Secretary	Ministry of Economics, Development and Industry	22 April 2005
Bryan Star	Project Officer	Ministry of Economics, Development and Industry	26 April 2005
Jarden Kepes	A/Secretary	Ministry of Education	4 May 2005

NAURU cont.

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
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Government cont.

Charmaine Scotty	Secretary	Ministry of Health and Medical Services	4 May 2005
Jenny Reiyetsi	Hansard Secretary	Parliament	4 May 2005
Peter Jacob	CEO	Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources	5 May 2005

NIUE

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
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Media

Michael Jackson	Editor and Publisher	Niue Star	31 August 2004
Patrick Lino	General Manager	Broadcasting Corporation of Niue	2 September 2004
Stafford Guest	Editor	Niue News Online	2 September 2004

Government

Peleni Talagi	Senior Crown Counsellor	Premier's Department	10,12,18 August '04
Sinahemena Hekau	Assistant Crown Counsellor	Premier's Department	10,12,18 August '04
Niu Tauevihi	Public Relations Officer	Premier's Department	30 August 2004
Birtha Lisimoni*	Special Projects Coordinator	Premier's Department	23 August 2004
Atapana Siakimotu*	Speaker of the House of Assembly	Niue Legislative Assembly	26 August 2004

Civil Society

Merry-Anne Talagi	Secretary	Niue Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NIUANGO)	12 August 2004
Rev Pahetogia Faitala	President	Niue National Council of Churches (NNCC)	14 August 2004
Aokuso Pavihi	Co-ordinator	Niue Island Organic Farmer's Association (NIOFA)	25 August 2004
Desmond Hipa	President	Niue Island's Sports Association and National Olympic Committee (NISANOC)	August 2004

PALAU

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
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Media

Moses Uludong	Publisher	Tia Belau and Meluich	6 August 2004
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PALAU cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media cont.			
Abed Younis	Publisher	Palau Horizon	13 August 2004
Alfonso Diaz	Station Owner	WWFM 89.5	23 August 2004
Ben Yobech	Station Manager	Government Radio (T8AA and Eco Paradise)	1 September 2004
Ernest Ongidobel	News Director	Government Radio (T8AA and Eco Paradise)	1 September 2004
Government			
Bonifacio Basilius	Framer of Constitution	Consultant	12 August 2004
Billy Kuartei	Presidential Chief of Staff	Government of Palau	16 August 2004
Michael Rosenthal	Minister of Justice	Ministry of Justice	14 August 2004
Valerie Whipps	Tobacco Control Program Coordinator	Ministry of Health	17 August 2004
Arvin Raymond	Chief	Division of Transportation and Communication	31 August 2004
Mario Katosang	Minister	Ministry of Education	1 September 2004
Salvador Tellames	Director	Bureau of Domestic Affairs	9 September 2004
Civil Society			
Tiare Holm	Acting Executive Director	Palau Conservation Society	31 August 2004
Sirino Hideo	Development Officer	Palau International Coral Reef Center	1 September 2004
PNG			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Yakam Kelo	Editor	Wantok Niuspepa	13 August 2004
Frank Senge Kolma	Editor-in-Chief	The National	28 Aug./10 Sep.2004
Peter Aitsi	President/Chief Executive	Media Council of Papua New Guinea/PNG FM	17 September 2004
Justin Kili	Chair, Training Committee	Media Council of Papua New Guinea	27 September 2004
Therese Natera	Editor News	PNG FM	17 September 2004
Leo Wafiwa	Strand Leader, Journalism	University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG)	24 September 2004
Peter Tareasi	Managing Director	FM100	28 September 2004
Martha Rupa	News Editor	FM100	28 September 2004

PNG cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media cont.			
Bob Howarth	Managing Director	Post Courier	4 October 2004
Oseah Philemon	Editor	Post Courier	4 October 2004
Br Michael McManus	Lecturer, Journalism	Divine Word University (DWU), Madang	28 November 2004
Dorah Massueng	News Director	National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)	1 December 2004
Memefu Kapera	Executive Director	Karai National Radio, NBC	13 December 2004
Dr. Kris Nadkarna	Managing Director	NBC	3 March 2005
Government			
Henao Iduhu	Acting Secretary	Department of State Enterprises and Information (DSEI)	30 August 2004 and 11 April 2005
Kenneth Aviri	Information officer	DSEI	30 August 2004
Joe Kanekane	Media and Public Information Adviser, Law and Justice Sector Project	Department of National Planning and Monitoring	1 September 2004
Kora Nou	Director	Prime Minister's Media Unit	27 September 2004
Margaret Munjin	Information Officer	National AIDS Council Secretariat (NACS)	2 October 2004
Priscilla Maigu	Public Relations	National Fisheries Authority (NFA)	27 November 2004
Collin Taimbari	Public Relations	Tourism Promotion Authority (TPA)	27 November 2004
Fay Duega	Information Officer	PNG Forest Authority (PNGFA)	27 November 2004
Soldier Buruka	Public Relations Media Officer	Department of Agriculture and Livestock	27 November 2004
Monica Ding	Secretary	First Legislative Councillor	1 December 2004
Daniel Paraide	Chief Librarian	National Library	1 December 2004
Helen Benjamin	Team Leader, Customer Services	Investment Promotion Authority	2 December 2004
Paulus Ain	Assistant Manager, Regulatory Affairs	Independent Consumer and Competition Commission (ICCC)	9 December 2004
Kapu Kacey Ora	Chief Licencing Officer	PANGTEL	11 April 2005
Kila Aluvula	Broadcast Engineer	PANGTEL	9 December 2004
Kennedy Wai	Broadcast Engineer	PANGTEL	9 December 2004
Civil Society			
Dr Rodney Kameata	National Coordinator	Community Justice Liaison Unit	22 September 2004

PNG cont.**Civil Society cont.**

Alphonse Pu	Director	The Foundation for Rural Development (FORD)	6 October 2004
Wenceslaus Magun*	Communications Officer	Conservation International	11 October 2004
Elizabeth Cox	Manager	Health-Education-Livelihood-Participation (HELP) Resources	14 October 2004
Hilan Los*	Chair	Individual and Community Rights Advocacy Forum (ICRAF)	21 October 2004
Barbara Masike*	Melanesian Partnership Coordinator	The Nature Conservancy	22 November 2004
Richard Brunton*	IT Manager	Environment Law Centre	28 November 2004
Jane Melpia*		Community Development Scheme	28 November 2004
Margaret Sete*	Executive Director	NGO Capacity Building PNG	28 November 2004

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Fred Pedro	Station Manager	V7MI Radio	7 August 2004
Antari Elbon	Station Manager	Government Radio V7AB	12 August 2004
Giff Johnson	Editor	Marshall Islands Journal	12 August 2004
Irene Taafaki	Director	The University of the South Pacific Extension Centre, Majuro	19 August 2004
Government			
Russell Edwards	Assistant Secretary, Primary Health Care Bureau	Ministry of Health	6 August 2004
Arti Mattala	Health Education, Health Promotion and Human Services	Primary Health Care Bureau, Ministry of Health	6 August 2004
John Bungitak	General Manager	Marshall Islands Environmental Protection Authority	6 August 2004
Filimon Manoni*	Legislative Counsel	Nitijela (Parliament)	6 August 2004
Cartney Laukon*	Director of Communications	Ministry of Transportation and Communications	18 August 2004
Bob Jericho	Public Relations Officer	President's Office	20 August 2004
Fred Muller	Secretary	Ministry of Resources and Development	20 August 2004
Biram Stege	Secretary	Ministry of Education	26 August 2004
Valentino Anuntak	Media Director	Ministry of Education	26 August 2004
Carl Ingram*	Chief Justice	High Court	26 August 2004

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS cont.

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Civil Society			
John Bungitak	Project Manager	Jaluit Atoll Conservation Area	6 August 2004
Terry Sasser	Director	Mission Pacific	13 August 2004
Marie Maddison	Advisor/Director of Administration	Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI)	20 August 2004
Omita Jorlang	Clinic Services Coordinator	Youth to Youth in Health	23 August 2004
Bernice Joash	Executive Director	Alele Museum	27 August 2004

SAMOA

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Faieseai Lei Sam Matafeo	Chief Executive Officer	Samoa Broadcasting Corporation (SBC)	9 September 2004
Merita Huch	News Editor	SBC	11 October 2004
Afereti Lui	Chief Technical Manager	SBC	12 October 2004
Atanoa Herbert Crichton	Advertising and Marketing Manager	SBC	18 October 2004
Afamasaga Tovaega	Chief Executive Officer	Aiga Fesilafa'i FM Radio (Catholic Church)	4 October 2004
Ame Sene	News Director	Radio Polynesia	8 October 2004
Angela Kronfeld	Finance and Advertising Manager	Talamua Publications Limited (Le Samoa Newspaper)	3 November 2004
Lemalu Rosamonde Afamasaga	Editor	Government Newspaper, Savali	3 November 2004
Nora Tumua	Senior Lecturer - Journalism Programme	Samoa Polytechnic	12 November 2004
Lance Polu	President	Pacific Islands News Association (PINA)	17 January 2005
Autagavaia Tipi Autagavaia	President	Journalists Association of Western Samoa (JAWS)	7 April 2005
Peter Lomas	Training and Development Editor	Samoa Observer Newspaper Group	10 May 2005
Government			
Uale Papali'i Taimalelagi	Press Secretary to Government	Government Press Secretariat, Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	5 October 2004
Tua'imalo Ah Samu	Chief Executive Officer	Ministry of Communication and Information Technology	13 October 2004

SAMOA cont.

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Government cont.			
A'aone Tanumafili	Information, Communication and Health Education Officer	Ministry of Health	14 October 2004
Fiasili Leaupepe	Senior Information Officer	Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, Fisheries & Meteorology	18 October 2004
Saivaega Vasa	Principal Communication Officer	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	20 October 2004
Sa'olotoga Fa'asavalu	Information Officer	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	21 October 2004
Civil Society			
Ofeira Salevao-Manutai	Director	Fa'ataua Le Ola (FLO, Suicide Awareness)	20 September 2004
Nofovaleane Mapuilesua*	President	Nuanua o le Alofa Inc.	21 September 2004
Adimaimalaga Tafunai*	Executive Director	Women in Business Foundation	22 September 2004
Donna Lene	President	Loto Taumafai Society for the Disabled	23 September 2004
Roina Faatauvaavavatau	Chief Executive Officer	Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organisations (SUNGO)	6 October 2004
Fiu Mataese	Chief Executive Officer	Le S'iosiomaga Society Incorporated	15 October 2004

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Randal Biliki	PFnet Manager	People First Network (Pfnet)	30 July 2004
John Lamani	Owner/Publisher	The Solomon Star Company Limited	3 August 2004
Elizabeth Thelma	Acting Editor	Solomon Star	3 August 2004
Ofani Ereimae*	Editor	Solomon Star	September 2004
Priestly Habru*	Sports Editor	Solomon Star	September 2004
Robert Luke Iroga*	Senior Reporter	Solomon Star	September 2004
George Herming*	Journalist	Solomon Star	September 2004
Deli Oso	Editor	National Express	3 August 2004
Peter Hirume	Sales Officer	National Express	3 August 2004
Marilyn Kwalea*	Cadet Reporter/Feature writer	National Express	September 2004

SOLOMON ISLANDS cont.

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media cont.			
Ednal Palmer	Acting Editor News	Paoa FM	3 August 2004
Geoff Kuper	Chief Engineer/ Programme Manager	Paoa FM	10 August 2004
Johnson Honimae	General Manager	Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC)	10 August 2004
Walter Nalangu	News Editor	SIBC	13 August 2004
Simon Papage*	Senior Journalist	SIBC	September 2004
Charles Stennett*	Journalist	SIBC	September 2004
Alfren Inomae*	Journalist	SIBC	September 2004
Julian Maka'a	Senior Officer	Wantok FM, SIBC	30 September 2004
Ashley Wickham	Managing Director	TVSI Ltd	9 September 2004
June Maru	Freelance Journalist	ZFM100	14 September 2004
Brian Beti*	Station Manager	ZFM100	September 2004
Government			
Alfred Maesulia	Director	Government Communications Unit, Prime Minister's Office	6 August 2004
Moira Nowak	Webmaster	Department of Commerce	6 August 2004
Alby Lovi	Director, Health Education Unit	Ministry of Health and Medical Services	27 August 2004
John Selwyn Tiaro	Media Officer	Royal Solomon Islands Police	7 September 2004
George Atkin	Press Secretary to the Prime Minister	Office of the Prime Minister	21 September 2004
Civil Society			
Father Ambrose Pereira	Director	Catholic Communications Solomon	3 August 2004
Joe Vidiki	Radio Producer	Catholic Communications Solomon	2 August 2004
Ethel Suri	Programme Officer	Vois Blong Mere Solomon (VBMS)	3 August 2004
Jennifer Wate	Editor of Link Magazine	Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT)	12 August 2004
Brenda Mauli	Journalist	SIDT	4 August 2004
Maureen Vavozo	Coordinator	Family Support Centre (FSC)	26 August 2004
Ian Aujare	Male Advocacy Officer	FSC	26 August 2004
Julianne Oge	Child Advocacy Officer	Save the Children Australia	20 September 2004
Robert Chris	Training Coordinator/ Radio Producer	Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres (SIARTC)	24 September 2004
Rolland Gito	Manager Information, Education, Communication	Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association (SIPPA)	24 September 2004

TONGA			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Katalina Tohi	Chief Programming Officer	Tonga Broadcasting Commission (TBC)	29 August 2004
Laumanu Petelo	Programming Manager	Television and Radio Tonga, TBC	31 August 2004
Pesi Fonua	Editor and Publisher/Chairman	Matangi Tonga News Online/Media Council Incorporated (Tonga)	6 September 2004
Tavake Fsimalohi	Editor	Kele'a Newspaper	7 September 2004
Sister Sinai Vaka'uta	Assistant Editor	Taumu'a Lelei Catholic Newspaper	10 September 2004
Salote Fukofuka	Principal	The University of the South Pacific, Tonga	10 September 2004
Mateni Tapueluelu	Editor	Taimi 'o Tonga Newspaper	20 September 2004
Mateaki Heimuli	Manager/Acting Editor	Tonga Chronicle	22 September 2004
Government			
Siaosi 'Aho	Commissioner	Commission for Public Relations	1 September 2004
Paula Ma'u	Deputy Secretary	Department of Communication, Prime Minister's Office	8 September 2004
Lupe 'Ilaiu	Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, Information Unit	Prime Minister's Office	8 September 2004
Alfred Soakai	Senior Communication Counsel	Department of Communication, Prime Minister's Office	8 September 2004
Fekita 'Utoikamanu	Secretary	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	16 September 2004
Dr Viliami Puloka	Acting Chief Medical Officer, Public Health	Ministry of Health	18 October 2004
Paula Taufu	Acting Director	Department of Environment	18 October 2004
Sione Talanoa Fifita	Project Manager, Business Development Services Unit	Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries	18 October 2004
Taia Leha	Radio and TV Producer	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food	5 November 2004
Civil Society			
Fuiva Kavaliku	Secretary	Langafonua National Women Centre	8 September 2004
Hauoli Vi	Communication Officer	Langafonua National Women Centre	8 September 2004
'Ofa Guttenbeil-Likiliki	Coordinator, Project #4 CEDAW	Catholic Women's League (CWL)	9 September 2004

TONGA cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Civil Society cont.			
Lopeti Senituli	Executive Director/ former Chair, Human Rights and Democracy	Tonga Trust	20 September 2004
Simione Silapelu	President	Tonga Association for Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO)	20 September 2004
Rev Simote Vea	Secretary-General	Tonga National Council of Churches (TNCC)	21 September 2004
TUVALU			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Melali Taape	General Manager	Tuvalu Media Corporation (TMC)	5 August 2004
Ruby Alefaio	Chief Program Officer	Radio Tuvalu, TMC	6 August 2004
Diana Semi	Journalist	Radio Tuvalu, TMC	6 August 2004
Yvette Tepaula	Journalist	Radio Tuvalu, TMC	6 August 2004
Tetele Kilifi	Journalist	Radio Tuvalu, TMC	6 August 2004
Jane Soani	Journalist/Announcer	Radio Tuvalu, TMC	6 August 2004
Penina Iakina	Journalist/Announcer	Radio Tuvalu, TMC	6 August 2004
Semi Tataua	Journalist/Announcer	Radio Tuvalu, TMC	6 August 2004
Silafaga Lalua	Editor	Tuvalu Echoes, TMC	18 August 2004
Mahu Faletiuete	Journalist	Tuvalu Echoes, TMC	18 August 2004
Government			
Panapasi Nelesone	Secretary to Government and Chair of Tuvalu Media Corporation	Office of the Prime Minister	3 August 2004
Saini Filipi	Director	Department of Women's Affairs	4 August 2004
Pulafagu Toafa	Research/ Information Officer	Department of Women's Affairs	6 August 2004
Dr Tekaa Nelesone	Director	Ministry of Health	4 August 2004
Misalaima Leuelu Nelesone	Secretary	Ministry of Health	10 August 2004
Avanoa Paelate	Health Promotion Officer	Ministry of Health	18 August 2004
Dr Stephen Homasi	Medical Superintendent	Ministry of Health	7 August 2004

TUVALU cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Government cont.			
Lopati Tefoto	General Manager	Tuvalu Telecommunication Corporation (TTC)	5 August 2004
Eseta Lauti	Foreign Affairs Officer	Department of Foreign Affairs	9 August 2004
Mataio Tekinene	Director of Environment	Department of Environment	10 August 2004
Valisi Alimau	Senior Education Officer	Department of Education	10 August 2004
Kilei Amasone	Information Officer in Community Affairs	Department of Community Affairs	10 August 2004
Petueli Noa	Youth Officer	Department of Youth	11 August 2004
Rt Hon Kamuta Latasi	Leader of the Opposition	Parliament	16 August 2004
Hon Otinielu Tautele I-Malae Tausi	Speaker of Parliament	Government of Tuvalu	16 August 2004
Hon Leti Pelesala	Minister	Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development	16 August 2004
Hon Samuelu P Teo	Minister	Ministry of Natural Resources	18 August 2004
Civil Society			
Kitiona Tausi	General Secretary	Tuvalu Christian Church (TCC)	4 August 2004
Emily Koepke	Executive Director	Tuvalu Family Health Association (TFHA)	6 August 2004
Annie Homasi	Coordinator	Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO)	16 August 2004
Susie Saitala Kofe	Legal Rights Training Officer	Tuvalu National Council of Women (TNCW)	16 August 2004
VANUATU			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media			
Mark Neil Jones	Publisher/ Managing Director	Daily Post	10 August 2004
Evelyne Toa	Former Chair/ Sub-Editor	Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC)/ The Independent	10 August 2004
Bob Makin	Editor	The Independent	21 September 2004
Jonas Cullwick	General Manager	VBTC	23 August 2004
James Moli	Program Manager	VBTC	23 August 2004
Maloni Albert	Acting News Manager	VBTC	23 August 2004

VANUATU cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Media cont.			
Pascal Laban	Television Blong Vanuatu, Manager	VBTC	23 August 2004
Moses Stephen	Publisher/Editor	ni-Vanuatu Niuspepa	10 September 2004
Kerry Manasa	President	Media Association Blong Vanuatu	15 September 2004
Derrick W Harvey	Advisor	CREST FM Community Radio, Tanna	17 September 2004
Marke Lowen	Publisher	Port Vila Presse online	4 April 2005
Government			
Enoch Leon	Technician	Department of Education	13 August 2004
Thomas Simon Marakitere	Education Officer, Responsible for Distance Education	Department of Education	17 August 2004
Jessie Dick	Director, Planning and Policy Division	Department of Education	12 August 2004
Jane Strachan	Advisor	Department of Women's Affairs	13 August 2004
Lionel Kalwat	Acting Commissioner of Labor	Department of Labor	17 August 2004
George Pakoa Songi	Secretary	Public Service Commission	18 August 2004
Mark Bebe	Director	Department of Strategic Management	19 August 2004
Jean Francois Metmetsan	Media Officer	Department of Strategic Management	19 August 2004
Doresthy Kenneth	Director of Agriculture	Department of Agriculture	23 August 2004
Martin Tete	Principal Electoral Officer	Electoral Office	23 August 2004
Ambong Thompson	Assistant Curator - National Film and Sound Unit	Vanuatu Cultural Centre	7 September 2004
David Gibson	Scientific Officer - Forecaster (Weather section)	Department of Meteorology	23 September 2004
Civil Society			
Sister Renee Heraud	Diocesan Director of Social Communication	Catholic Church of Vanuatu	17 August 2004
Joe Harry	Media Representative	Vanuatu National Workers Union (VNWU)	20 August 2004
Dan Magarry	Project Officer	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSP) Vanuatu	20 August 2004

VANUATU cont.			
Name	Position	Organisation	Date of Interview
Civil Society cont.			
Berton Joes	Training Officer	Vanuatu Rural Development Training Communities Centre (VRDTCA)	25 August 2004
Marylyn Tahi	Chief Executive Officer	Vanuatu Women's Centre	25 August 2004
Michael Taurakoto	Good Governance Project Manager	Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group	25 August 2004
Judith Iakavai	Support Staff / Responsible for Media	Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW)	26 August 2004
Mari Nicllum	CEO	Vanuatu Family Health Association (VFHA)	27 August 2004
Hilson Toalia	Country Program Director	Save the Children Australia	14 September 2004

APPENDIX E: ACTS AND BILLS EXAMINED FOR CHAPTER TWO, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA, PART II

Cook Islands

The study examined the *Broadcasting Act 1989*, which sets out the legislative framework for the operations of the media in the Cook Islands (and repealed the *Broadcasting and Newspaper Corporation Act 1970–1971*), and the *Telecommunications Act 1989*, which makes provision for the licensing of radio apparatus. The Media Bill 2004 and associated codes were also examined.

Fiji

In Fiji the principal pieces of legislation examined were the *Broadcasting Commission Act 1953*, the *Television Decree 1992*, the *Press Correction Act 1949* and the *Newspaper Registration Act 1895*.

Kiribati

In Kiribati the study examined the *Radio-Telecommunications Regulations 1998*, made under the *Telecommunication Act 1983*, which establish the framework for the licensing of broadcasting, the *Broadcasting and Publication Authority Ordinance 1979*, which provides for the establishment of the government-owned radio broadcaster and the *Newspaper Registration Act 1988*, which governs the operations of print media.

Papua New Guinea

The study examined the PNG *Broadcasting Corporation Act 1973*, which regulates the operations of the national broadcaster, the *Radio Spectrum Act 1996* and *Regulations 1997*, which provide the framework for the licensing of radio and television broadcasters, the *Telecommunications Act 1996*, under which cable television is licensed, the *Classification of Publication (Censorship) Act 1989*, which applies to all media content, and the *Printers and Newspapers Act 1956*, which prescribes a registration framework for all printed material.

Republic of the Marshall Islands

The study examined the Marshall Islands *Radio Communications Act 1990*, which applies to both radio and television communications, and the *Political Broadcast Access Act 1990*, which stipulates a right of access to the state-owned media by political candidates.

Solomon Islands

The study examined the Solomon Islands *Broadcasting Act 1996*, which establishes the public service broadcaster, together with the *Telecommunications Act 1996* and *Television Act 1996*, which in combination regulate radio and television operations. The draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation Bill was also examined, as was the Federal Constitution of Solomon Islands Bill 2004.

Tonga

The study examined the Tonga *Communication Act 2000*, which establishes the communications licensing framework and the *Prohibited Publications Act 1960* (1988 edition). The *Newspaper Act 2003* and the *Media Operators Act 2003*. The *Broadcasting Commission Act 1989*, which establishes the national broadcaster, has not been sighted.

Tuvalu

The study examined the Tuvalu *Media Corporation Act 1999*, which establishes the Tuvalu national broadcaster, and the Tuvalu *Telecommunications Corporation Act 1993*, which establishes the framework for the provision of telecommunications and radio and television spectrum.

Vanuatu

The study examined the Vanuatu *Broadcasting and Television Act 1992* (as amended), which establishes the national broadcaster and contains the regulatory framework for non-government broadcasters, and the *Newspaper (Restriction on Publication) Act 1982* (1988 consolidation), which restricts the ability of non-citizens to publish a newspaper in Vanuatu.

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APPENDIX F: NEWS CONTENT ANALYSIS TABLES REGIONAL SUMMARY

Publications sampled:

Fiji Times; Fiji Sun; Daily Post; Fiji TV One; Radio Fiji (FBCL); Communications Fiji Ltd; Cook Islands News; Palau Horizon; Post Courier; The National; NBC; NauFM; EM-TV; Solomon Star; Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation; Radio Tuvalu; Samoa Observer; 2AP (Radio Samoa); Televis Samoa; Talaki; Tonga Chronicle; Radio Tonga; PACNEWS; Television Tonga; Pacnews; FSM Government Information (Pohnpei); Radio Sunshine (Niue); The Independent; Vanuatu Broadcasting & Television Corporation; Marshall Islands Journal; Kiribati Newstar; Radio Kiribati; Newair FM.

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	597	169
Print	2608	997
TV	291	72
Total	3496	1238

Bylines: 1675 stories

Without bylines: 1821 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	343	1669	198	2210
Private/Corporate	71	497	69	637
NGO	44	235	16	295
Community Rep	27	254	36	317
Private Individual	34	367	23	424
Local Media	28	78	7	113
Regional media	11	13	1	25
International media	17	30	2	49
None of the above	11	3	0	14
Unknown	41	43	2	86

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	435	1752	178	2365
Multiple	162	842	113	1117
Unable to determine	0	14	0	14

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	128	304	63	495
Policy analysis/comment	130	360	52	542
Allegations/actions against public officials	66	199	34	299
				1336
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	38	178	22	238
Financial governance - private sector	36	114	7	157
Policy announcements	37	92	19	148
Policy analysis/comment	43	141	19	203
				746
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	34	203	27	264
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	8	68	6	82
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	21	68	2	91
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	3	52	5	60
				497
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	38	206	18	262
Women	21	85	3	109
Education	37	156	12	205
Infrastructure	36	242	8	286
Other community enterprises	60	273	37	370
				1232
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	18	124	6	148
Women	8	70	3	81
Education	16	115	5	136
Infrastructure	15	108	6	129
Other community enterprises	33	221	22	276
				770
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	78	413	19	510
Criminal activity (political)	55	68	23	146
Resource security	22	59	6	87
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	10	30	7	47
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	25	65	10	100
				890
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	15	76	2	93
Women	9	79	2	90
Children	6	75	5	86
Citizenship/residency	10	77	17	104
				373

COOK ISLANDS

Publications sampled:
Cook Islands News

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio		
Print	127	71
TV		
Total	127	71

Bylines: 99 stories

Without bylines: 28 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government		92		92
Private/Corporate		38		38
NGO		2		2
Community Rep		14		14
Private Individual		41		41
Local Media		2		2
Regional media		4		4
International media		4		4
None of the above				0
Unknown				0

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single		78		78
Multiple		49		49

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			Total
	Radio	Print	TV	
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements		51		51
Policy analysis/comment		42		42
Allegations/actions against public officials		4		4
				97
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector		17		17
Financial governance - private sector		6		6
Policy announcements		10		10
Policy analysis/comment		12		12
				45
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives		22		22
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate		8		8
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO		2		2
Non-government actions/initiatives - community		4		4
				36
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health		11		11
Women		8		8
Education		18		18
Infrastructure		6		6
Other community enterprises		52		52
				95
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health		1		1
Women		1		1
Education		5		5
Infrastructure		1		1
Other community enterprises		20		20
				28
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)		13		13
Criminal activity (political)		2		2
Resource security		3		3
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use		1		1
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues		1		1
				20
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious		12		12
Women		10		10
Children		14		14
Citizenship/residency		43		43
				79

FIJI ISLANDS

Publications sampled:

Fiji Times, Fiji Sun, Daily Post, Fiji TV One, Radio Fiji (FBCL), Communications Fiji Limited.

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	222	48
Print	1245	528
TV	172	38
Total	1639	614

Bylines: 829 stories

Without bylines: 810 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	105	783	107	995
Private/Corporate	36	237	57	330
NGO	28	118	14	160
Community Rep	10	108	31	149
Private Individual	18	188	20	226
Local Media	8	7	1	16
Regional media	4	1	1	6
International media	9	7	2	18
None of the above		1		1
Unknown	10	6		16

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	132	781	86	999
Multiple	90	464	86	640

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	64	49	43	156
Policy analysis/comment	68	97	24	189
Allegations/actions against public officials	30	100	27	157
				502
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	11	66	15	92
Financial governance - private sector	28	43	2	73
Policy announcements	24	25	12	61
Policy analysis/comment	22	52	5	79
				305
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	9	97	21	127
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	6	14	5	25
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	16	38	2	56
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	1	18	4	23
				231
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	13	102	10	125
Women	9	22	2	33
Education	10	57	5	72
Infrastructure	12	107	4	123
Other community enterprises	19	124	37	180
				533
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	6	24	5	35
Women	4	3	2	9
Education	3	29	2	34
Infrastructure	7	23	4	34
Other community enterprises	7	91	22	120
				232
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	19	302	12	333
Criminal activity (political)	31	30	23	84
Resource security	6	22	3	31
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	1	6	0	7
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	8	25	7	40
				495
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	2	39	2	43
Women	3	14	1	18
Children	0	9	3	12
Citizenship/residency	2	16	15	33
				106

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Publications sampled:
FSM Government Information (Pohnpei)

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio		
Print	5	see note
TV		
Total	5	0

Bylines: 1 stories

Without bylines: 4 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government		5		5
Private/Corporate				0
NGO				0
Community Rep				0
Private Individual				0
Local Media				0
Regional media				0
International media				0
None of the above				0
Unknown				0

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single		4		4
Multiple		1		1

Note: data was presented to researchers in such a way that order of stories was not known

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements		2		2
Policy analysis/comment		0		0
Allegations/actions against public officials		2		2
				4
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector		2		2
Financial governance - private sector		0		0
Policy announcements		1		1
Policy analysis/comment		0		0
				3
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives		0		0
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate		0		0
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO		0		0
Non-government actions/initiatives - community		0		0
				0
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health		0		0
Women		0		0
Education		0		0
Infrastructure		0		0
Other community enterprises		0		0
				0
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health		0		0
Women		0		0
Education		0		0
Infrastructure		0		0
Other community enterprises		0		0
				0
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)		1		1
Criminal activity (political)		0		0
Resource security		0		0
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use		0		0
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues		0		0
				1
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious		0		0
Women		0		0
Children		0		0
Citizenship/residency		0		0
				0

KIRIBATI

Publications sampled:
Kiribati Newstar, Radio Kiribati, Newair FM

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	17	2
Print	9	see note
TV		
Total	26	2

Bylines: 0 stories

Without bylines: 26 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	5	2		7
Private/Corporate	1			1
NGO	5			5
Community Rep				0
Private Individual		2		2
Local Media				0
Regional media		1		1
International media		3		3
None of the above				0
Unknown	1			1

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	13	9		22
Multiple	4			4

Note: data on print stories was presented to researchers in such a way that order of stories was not identifiable

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	5	2		7
Policy analysis/comment	1	2		3
Allegations/actions against public officials	2	0		2
				12
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	0	0		0
Financial governance - private sector	1	0		1
Policy announcements	0	0		0
Policy analysis/comment	0	0		0
				1
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	3	0		3
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	0	0		0
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	1	0		1
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	0	0		0
				4
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	4	0		4
Women	0	0		0
Education	0	0		0
Infrastructure	1	0		1
Other community enterprises	0	0		0
				5
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	1	0		1
Women	0	0		0
Education	1	0		1
Infrastructure	0	0		0
Other community enterprises	0	0		0
				2
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	3	0		3
Criminal activity (political)	0	0		0
Resource security	0	0		0
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	0	0		0
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	0	0		0
				3
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	0	0		0
Women	0	0		0
Children	0	0		0
Citizenship/residency	0	0		0
				0

NIUE

Publications sampled:
Radio Sunshine (BCN)

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	21	see note
Print		
TV		
Total	21	0

Bylines: 2 stories

Without bylines: 19 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	11			11
Private/Corporate	4			4
NGO	1			1
Community Rep	3			3
Private Individual				0
Local Media				0
Regional media				0
International media	1			1
None of the above	3			3
Unknown	4			4

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	8			8
Multiple	13			13

Note: data presented to researchers in such a way that order of stories could not be identified

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	3			3
Policy analysis/comment	2			2
Allegations/actions against public officials	2			2
				7
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	2			2
Financial governance - private sector	0			0
Policy announcements	2			2
Policy analysis/comment	0			0
				4
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	4			4
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	0			0
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	1			1
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	0			0
				5
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	3			3
Women	0			0
Education	1			1
Infrastructure	0			0
Other community enterprises	2			2
				6
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	0			0
Women	0			0
Education	2			2
Infrastructure	1			1
Other community enterprises	2			2
				5
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	0			0
Criminal activity (political)	0			0
Resource security	0			0
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	0			0
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	1			1
				1
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	0			0
Women	1			1
Children	1			1
Citizenship/residency	0			0
				2

PALAU

Publications sampled:
Palau Horizon

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio		
Print	114	39
TV		
Total	114	39

Bylines: 104 stories

Without bylines: 10 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government		88		88
Private/Corporate		10		10
NGO		6		6
Community Rep		1		1
Private Individual		7		7
Local Media		1		1
Regional media				0
International media				0
None of the above				0
Unknown		9		9

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single		74		74
Multiple		31		31
Unable to determine		9		9

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements		45		45
Policy analysis/comment		7		7
Allegations/actions against public officials		5		5
				57
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector		12		12
Financial governance - private sector		7		7
Policy announcements		2		2
Policy analysis/comment		1		1
				22
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives		4		4
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate		2		2
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO		0		0
Non-government actions/initiatives - community		0		0
				6
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health		14		14
Women		0		0
Education		6		6
Infrastructure		16		16
Other community enterprises		12		12
				48
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health		3		3
Women		1		1
Education		3		3
Infrastructure		4		4
Other community enterprises		7		7
				18
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)		16		16
Criminal activity (political)		2		2
Resource security		0		0
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use		1		1
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues		2		2
				21
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious		0		0
Women		0		0
Children		0		0
Citizenship/residency		0		0
				0

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Publications sampled:
Post Courier, The National, NBC, NauFM, EM-TV

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	102	64
Print	571	150
TV	82	22
Total	755	236

Bylines: 411 stories

Without bylines: 344 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	87	374	72	533
Private/Corporate	1	99	2	102
NGO	1	56		57
Community Rep	2	47	5	54
Private Individual		16		16
Local Media	11	32	5	48
Regional media				0
International media		4		4
None of the above				0
Unknown	1			1

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	101	504	79	684
Multiple	1	67	3	71

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	7	52	5	64
Policy analysis/comment	28	129	25	182
Allegations/actions against public officials	10	53	6	69
				315
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	8	21	3	32
Financial governance - private sector	0	18	1	19
Policy announcements	3	20	3	26
Policy analysis/comment	14	47	12	73
				150
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	3	9	3	15
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	0	11	0	11
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	0	4	0	4
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	0	6	0	6
				36
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	4	10	3	17
Women	0	0	0	0
Education	11	16	3	30
Infrastructure	0	23	2	25
Other community enterprises	0	10	0	10
				82
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	4	25	0	29
Women	0	4	0	4
Education	0	20	1	21
Infrastructure	0	7	0	7
Other community enterprises	0	18	0	18
				79
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	10	30	3	43
Criminal activity (political)	1	4	0	5
Resource security	3	12	2	17
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	6	11	7	24
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	2	6	0	8
				97
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	0	1	0	1
Women	0	4	0	4
Children	1	5	1	7
Citizenship/residency	1	0	1	2
				14

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Publications sampled:
Marshall Islands Journal

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio		
Print	27	19
TV		
Total	27	19

Bylines: 13 stories

Without bylines: 14 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government		14		14
Private/Corporate		10		10
NGO		2		2
Community Rep		1		1
Private Individual		9		9
Local Media		6		6
Regional media				0
International media		1		1
None of the above				0
Unknown				0

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single		18		18
Multiple		9		9

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements		12		12
Policy analysis/comment		5		5
Allegations/actions against public officials		3		3
				20
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector		11		11
Financial governance - private sector		14		14
Policy announcements		12		12
Policy analysis/comment		5		5
				42
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives		8		8
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate		6		6
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO		2		2
Non-government actions/initiatives - community		2		2
				18
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health		18		18
Women		18		18
Education		18		18
Infrastructure		16		16
Other community enterprises		17		17
				87
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health		20		20
Women		19		19
Education		19		19
Infrastructure		17		17
Other community enterprises		18		18
				93
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)		2		2
Criminal activity (political)		3		3
Resource security		0		0
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use		2		2
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues		0		0
				7
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious		5		5
Women		19		19
Children		20		20
Citizenship/residency		6		6
				50

SAMOA

Publications sampled:
Samoa Observer, Radio 2AP, Telewise Samoa

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	16	8
Print	108	32
TV	19	12
Total	143	52

Bylines: 84 stories

Without bylines: 59 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	10	86	10	106
Private/Corporate	1	35	4	40
NGO	2	13	1	16
Community Rep		55		55
Private Individual	2	45	1	48
Local Media		3	1	4
Regional media		2		2
International media		5		5
None of the above				0
Unknown	1	1	2	4

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	12	21	7	40
Multiple	4	87	12	103

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	5	13	5	23
Policy analysis/comment	0	9	0	9
Allegations/actions against public officials	2	4	1	7
				39
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	1	5	1	7
Financial governance - private sector	0	0	0	0
Policy announcements	1	4	0	5
Policy analysis/comment	0	7	0	7
				19
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	2	16	1	19
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	0	7	0	7
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	0	2	0	2
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	1	2	0	3
				31
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	0	2	1	3
Women	0	1	0	1
Education	1	2	3	6
Infrastructure	1	13	2	16
Other community enterprises	0	3	0	3
				29
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	0	1	0	1
Women	0	2	0	2
Education	0	0	1	1
Infrastructure	0	7	0	7
Other community enterprises	1	0	0	1
				12
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	3	14	3	20
Criminal activity (political)	0	2	0	2
Resource security	2	3	1	6
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	0	0	0	0
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	0	9	3	12
				40
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	0	3	0	3
Women	1	4	0	5
Children	0	5	0	5
Citizenship/residency	0	4	1	5
				18

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Publications sampled:
Solomon Star, Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	134	24
Print	261	122
TV		
Total	395	146

Bylines: 95 stories

Without bylines: 300 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	76	150		226
Private/Corporate	19	34		53
NGO	2	31		33
Community Rep	4	20		24
Private Individual	12	40		52
Local Media	5	9		14
Regional media	5	3		8
International media	2	1		3
None of the above	7			7
Unknown	6	11		17

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	106	177		283
Multiple	28	79		107
Unable to determine		5		5

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			Total
	Radio	Print	TV	
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	13	55		68
Policy analysis/comment	7	47		54
Allegations/actions against public officials	6	16		22
				144
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	1	12		13
Financial governance - private sector	0	6		6
Policy announcements	0	4		4
Policy analysis/comment	0	3		3
				26
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	2	24		26
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	0	9		9
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	1	13		14
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	0	7		7
				56
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	2	16		18
Women	5	5		10
Education	3	14		17
Infrastructure	2	18		20
Other community enterprises	23	16		39
				104
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	2	8		10
Women	1	3		4
Education	3	10		13
Infrastructure	1	10		11
Other community enterprises	15	26		41
				79
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	22	25		47
Criminal activity (political)	3	19		22
Resource security	4	7		11
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	1	6		7
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	3	11		14
				101
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	5	3		8
Women	0	1		1
Children	0	0		0
Citizenship/residency	2	1		3
				12

TONGA

Publications sampled:
Talaki, Tonga Chronicle, Radio Tonga, Television Tonga

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	17	see comment
Print	44	see comment
TV	18	see comment
Total	79	0

Bylines: 18 stories

Without bylines: 61 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	3	20	9	32
Private/Corporate	2	13	6	21
NGO	4	2	1	7
Community Rep		6		6
Private Individual		13	2	15
Local Media	2	10		12
Regional media				0
International media	3	2		5
None of the above		1		1
Unknown	2			2

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	12	25	6	43
Multiple	5	19	12	36

Note: data presented to researchers in such a way that order of stories could not be identified

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	7	9	10	26
Policy analysis/comment	4	2	3	9
Allegations/actions against public officials	0	5	0	5
				40
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	1	7	3	11
Financial governance - private sector	2	10	4	16
Policy announcements	1	10	4	15
Policy analysis/comment	1	3	2	6
				48
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	1	6	2	9
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	1	8	1	10
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	2	6	0	8
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	1	9	1	11
				38
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	3	25	4	32
Women	1	23	1	25
Education	1	19	1	21
Infrastructure	2	17	0	19
Other community enterprises	1	17	0	18
				115
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	4	30	1	35
Women	3	28	1	32
Education	3	24	1	28
Infrastructure	3	22	2	27
Other community enterprises	3	22	0	25
				147
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	0	6	1	7
Criminal activity (political)	1	2	0	3
Resource security	0	0	0	0
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	0	0	0	0
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	0	0	0	0
				10
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	0	11	0	11
Women	1	21	1	23
Children	1	19	1	21
Citizenship/residency	1	5	0	6
				61

TUVALU

Publications sampled:
Radio Tuvalu

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	14	see comment
Print		
TV		
Total	14	0

Bylines: 7 stories

Without bylines: 7 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	7			7
Private/Corporate	3			3
NGO				0
Community Rep				0
Private Individual	1			1
Local Media	1			1
Regional media	2			2
International media	2			2
None of the above	1			1
Unknown	2			2

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	12	25	6	43
Multiple	5	19	12	36

Note: data presented to researchers in such a way that order of stories could not be identified

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	2			2
Policy analysis/comment	7			7
Allegations/actions against public officials	0			0
				9
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	3			3
Financial governance - private sector	0			0
Policy announcements	0			0
Policy analysis/comment	1			1
				4
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	1			1
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	0			0
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	0			0
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	0			0
				1
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	3			3
Women	1			1
Education	3			3
Infrastructure	5			5
Other community enterprises	2			2
				14
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	0			0
Women	0			0
Education	0			0
Infrastructure	0			0
Other community enterprises	2			2
				2
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	1			1
Criminal activity (political)	0			0
Resource security	2			2
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	0			0
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	0			0
				3
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	1			1
Women	0			0
Children	0			0
Citizenship/residency	0			0
				1

VANUATU

Publications sampled:
The Independent, Vanuatu Broadcasting & Television Corporation

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio	54	23
Print	23	8
TV		
Total	77	31

Bylines: 11 stories

Without bylines: 66 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government	39	11		50
Private/Corporate	4	3		7
NGO	1	4		5
Community Rep	8			8
Private Individual	1	3		4
Local Media	1			1
Regional media				0
International media				0
None of the above				0
Unknown	14	5		19

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single	42	17		59
Multiple	12	6		18

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			
	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements	22	7		29
Policy analysis/comment	13	4		17
Allegations/actions against public officials	14	0		14
				60
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector	11	2		13
Financial governance - private sector	5	2		7
Policy announcements	6	0		6
Policy analysis/comment	5	0		5
				31
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives	9	1		10
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate	1	0		1
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO	0	1		1
Non-government actions/initiatives - community	0	1		1
				13
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health	6	0		6
Women	5	1		6
Education	7	1		8
Infrastructure	13	2		15
Other community enterprises	13	4		17
				52
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health	1	4		5
Women	0	2		2
Education	4	0		4
Infrastructure	3	2		5
Other community enterprises	3	3		6
				22
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)	20	0		20
Criminal activity (political)	19	0		19
Resource security	5	0		5
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use	2	0		2
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues	11	0		11
				57
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious	7	0		7
Women	3	0		3
Children	3	0		3
Citizenship/residency	4	0		4
				17

REGIONAL MEDIA

Publications sampled:
PACNEWS

SAMPLE SIZE

Media	Number of stories	Number of lead stories
Radio		
Print	74	28
TV		
Total	74	28

Bylines: 1 stories

Without bylines: 73 stories

SOURCES

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Government		44		44
Private/Corporate		18		18
NGO		1		1
Community Rep		2		2
Private Individual		3		3
Local Media		8		8
Regional media		2		2
International media		3		3
None of the above		1		1
Unknown		11		11

SINGLE/MULTIPLE SOURCE TOTALS

Source	Radio	Print	TV	Total
Single		44		44
Multiple		30		30

GOVERNANCE CATEGORIES

	Number of stories			Total
	Radio	Print	TV	
Political Governance				
Policy Announcements		7		7
Policy analysis/comment		16		16
Allegations/actions against public officials		7		7
				30
Economic Governance				
Financial governance - public sector		23		23
Financial governance - private sector		8		8
Policy announcements		4		4
Policy analysis/comment		11		11
				46
Natural Resources				
Government actions/initiatives		16		16
Non-government actions/initiatives - corporate		3		3
Non-government actions/initiatives - NGO		0		0
Non-government actions/initiatives - community		3		3
				22
Development and Community				
Impact of government projects, policy, action on -				
Health		8		8
Women		7		7
Education		5		5
Infrastructure		24		24
Other community enterprises		18		18
				62
Impact of private sector projects, policy, action on -				
Health		8		8
Women		7		7
Education		5		5
Infrastructure		24		24
Other community enterprises		18		18
				51
Law, Conflict and Security				
Criminal activity (socio-economic)		8		8
Criminal activity (political)		7		7
Resource security		5		5
Disputes over land tenure, ownership, use		24		24
Community conflict not based on resource security or land issues		18		18
				34
Human Rights				
Cultural and/or religious		2		2
Women		6		6
Children		3		3
Citizenship/residency		2		2
				13